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The Shape of Things

THE REPORT OF THE COMPTON COMMISSION on Universal Training has brought this country face to face with the realities of atomic war. According to the report, the first day's attack might well obliterate our twelve major cities, eliminate most of our productive facilities, and throw our transportation and communications systems into chaos. Possibilities of intercepting this initial attack were considered to be slight. The only hope of emerging "victorious" rested upon a national population trained to meet the emergency and rapidly to mount a counter-offensive. It may be useful to project the lines of present political conflict into the future and face the logic of cataclysmic war to which they point. Certainly, we can take little comfort from the labors of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission which this week arrived at a new stalemate. It is clearly suicidal to abandon such efforts toward international agreement on a control system. But time is running out, as David Lilienthal's speech to the commission last week indicated. Stressing once more the necessity of an Atomic Development Authority with super-sovereign powers, Lilienthal emphasized that the United States would continue research in the field of atomic energy and keep up the manufacture of bombs until agreement was reached. His remarks underline the fact that the alternative to a United Nations system of security are competing national-security systems based on the assumption that war will come.

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BUT ARE WE DOING ALL THAT IS POSSIBLE to make such a war unlikely? Wars are not deliberately chosen by nations. They grow out of deteriorating political and economic situations and out of the fears, suspicions, and human misery these situations breed. The structure of the United Nations is evidence of this truth. Many of its functions are related to the rebuilding of the world economy. But the U. N.'s various agencies are powerless unless they have the full support of the one power of paramount economic strength and resources. The efforts of the United States so far, magnanimous in the emergency activities of UNRRA, have been faltering and equivocal in the job of reconstruction. The outside world is going bankrupt, its dollar stocks are being rapidly exhausted, its imports are threatened with blockade, political chaos is succeeding economic chaos. Quite apart from the imminent threat to our own economy of a bankrupt world, Europe and Asia in prolonged economic misery will inevitably become the breeding ground for that war the Compton commission asks us to prepare for. If we are going to come to our senses we had better come quickly—and that goes for our President, our State Department, and, most of all, our Congress. Perhaps Secretary Marshall's Harvard address last week indicates a broader wisdom in high places than has previously been demonstrated. The Secretary said: "It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace." Whatever we do, it should be done soon and on a scale vastly larger than any suggested by our previous efforts.

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"SPEAK LOUDLY AND STAND YOUR STICK IN the corner" might be Mr. Truman's rewording of the famous motto of the redoubtable T. R. In any case, his denunciation of the government upset in Hungary as a "terrific outrage" was followed by a temperately worded State Department note to the Russian commander in Budapest protesting against Soviet intervention and requesting a three-power investigation of the crisis. Various proposals that strong steps be taken to deal with the matter have mostly subsided; not because the Administration is reconciled to the ousting of Premier Nagy or the concentration of Communist control that has followed, but because it is quite clear that the United States is not in a position to apply effective penalties either to Russia or to Hungary. This being the case, it is too bad that Mr. Truman—and, more cautiously, Senator Vandenberg—should have made such loud and threatening noises.

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THE STORY BEHIND THE HUNGARIAN UPSET is still obscure. The Communists and Socialists insist that an anti-government plot existed and that the ex-Premier was a party to it. Mr. Nagy denies the second charge, inquiring why he should conspire against his own government. On this point one must suspend judgment. Only full publication of the facts, which the Russians say they obtained from Bela Kovacs, arrested secretary of the Smallholders' Party, and then turned over to the Hun-

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garian government, will clear the matter up. But independent observers are convinced that the reactionary wing of the Smallholders—a catch-all party in which many dispossessed and disgruntled aristocrats have found refuge—has been actively plotting to undo the revolutionary changes instituted by the government. Leftists also charge that this faction is in constant touch with agents of the Western powers. But aside from conspiracies, many sharp and open divisions of policy separate the left political groups from those on the right, even within the government. One of the factors in the recent coup was the bitter dispute between the Smallholders and the two working-class parties over the nationalization of Hungary's leading banks, which today dominate the financial life of the country. Premier Nagy, who opposed nationalization, was outmaneuvered during his absence in Switzerland when the Hungarian Economic Council appointed controllers for the thirteen major banks. According to Tibor Mende, financial editor of the European edition of the New York *Herald Tribune*, this move, which put the banks directly under supervision of the Ministry of Finance, must have been regarded by Mr. Nagy "as a first step . . . toward nationalization." His forced resignation and the appointment of Mr. Dinnyes came close on the heels of this economic coup.

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FOR THE UNENVIABLY DIFFICULT AND delicate job of administering the aid-to-Greece program President Truman has at least chosen a better candidate than we feared he might. If Dwight P. Griswold is not as well informed on the Balkans as Mark Ethridge or as incontestably liberal as Robert M. La Follette, both prominently mentioned for the post, neither is he another general or a representative of big business, like William H. Harrison, Paul Hoffman, and Philip Reed, who were likewise under consideration. The former governor of Nebraska, a Willkie Republican, was defeated for the Senatorial nomination last year by the violently isolationist Hugh Butler, whose opposition is in itself something of a recommendation. Although the enthusiasm on Capitol Hill is considerably less than hysterical, there is little reason to doubt that the appointment will be confirmed by the Senate. The coolness has more to do with domestic than international politics. Some Democrats resent the appointment of a Republican; some Republicans resent the choice of an avowed supporter of Stassen for President; and other Republicans, we suspect, are not too keen at the prospect of sharing party responsibility for what is at best a risky undertaking. Mr. Griswold's little acceptance speech was sensible and moderate. "Communism," he said, "seems to thrive on distress." The program would be directed toward eliminating that distress. "The major matter" is not the military aspect of the enterprise, but rather the necessity of putting Greece "back on her feet economically." That

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will require a stiff backbone, a keen mind, and a hide tough enough to take the arrows of jittery Congressmen as well as outraged Greek royalists.

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THE UNITED NATIONS LAST WEEK CANCELED its agreement to rent 912 apartments for its employees in housing projects of the Metropolitan and New York Life Insurance companies. It is hard to see how a world organization dedicated to promote "the fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race" could have done otherwise, for the insurance companies wanted to pass on each applicant individually. The attitude of the companies in excluding Negroes from their projects has long been demonstrated. In Metropolitan's tax-exempt Stuyvesant Town there will be no Negroes, for "Negroes and whites don't mix," says its board chairman. "A hundred years from now, maybe they will." The United Nations refuses to wait a hundred years. It insisted upon leasing the dwelling units in bulk so as to forestall another Stuyevesant Town ghetto. The issue is more serious than appears on the surface. No housing project can be built today without the help of New York's big lending institutions. Without housing for its employees, U. N. cannot function. Every news item pointing up racial discrimination here is a big story abroad. Three steps should now be taken: (1) The insurance companies are supervised by Governor Dewey's insurance superintendent. A complete investigation should be made and the facts aired without delay. (2) The United States District Attorney should investigate and bring indictments if warranted. A government proceeding is now pending against lending institutions in the New York area for racial-discrimination practices in mortgage lending. (3) Mayor O'Dwyer should have the New York City Housing Authority provide the housing needed without delay. The machinery is available, and the Authority could build the housing in less than a year.

Arm Thine Enemy

AS A diplomat, Spruille Braden had strange ideas. Just because Argentine President Juan Domingo Perón had all but made a career of *yanqui*-baiting, Braden assumed that he was hostile to the United States. Because Perón had set up a systematic and thoroughgoing tyranny, replete with violence and the *Führerprinzip,* Braden regarded him as an enemy of democracy. Because Argentina, militarized and rich, had blatantly intimidated Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia, Braden considered it aggressive. And on the basis of these hasty conclusions he thought it ill-advised to sign a defense pact with the Argentines and perhaps even dangerous to send them arms.

In contrast to this dreamy approach, Ambassador Messersmith, with strong backing in the War Department and in the Senate, stood for stern realism. Perón had said that he was getting rid of the Nazis who had helped boost him to power, though, of course, his secret police could not be expected to round up all of them. Why not take his word, just as Chamberlain took Hitler's word at Munich and at Godesberg? And if Perón had corrupted the courts of Argentina, hamstrung its democratic newspapers, and exiled its best teachers—all in violation of international pledges—surely that was not our affair. As Sumner Welles repeatedly pointed out, the days of Yankee intervention were over. Good neighborliness required us not merely to ignore these human foibles of the Peronistas but to invite them to share with us in the defense of the hemisphere.

Now Mr. Braden is on his way out, his resignation "reluctantly" accepted by the President. Friendship between the United States and Argentina has been restored, and the way is being smoothed for calling the long-delayed Rio conference. Messersmith, too, is on his way home, his mission accomplished. Once again realism has triumphed.

In view of this diplomatic success, the air is remarkably clouded with doubt. The New York *Times* trusts that "the course now chosen will restore that hemisphere unity which has been strained by the long impasse," but its trust is not so great as to overcome its fear that "the Perón regime . . . is still potentially a seed-bed of fascism on this continent." The Washington *Post* says we have merely "patched up" our quarrel with a country that "had become a haven for fascist activity in this hemisphere." And the New York *Herald Tribune,* conceding the development as "the only practicable solution for an impossible situation," admits that it means giving arms to "this unreliable and dangerously dynamic experiment in New World fascist totalitarianism."

In this murky atmosphere one must suppose that Secretary of State Marshall sees some compensating gain not quite visible to the rest of us. As far as we know, the immediate consequences of the great rapprochement will be these: the nations of the hemisphere will meet at Rio de Janeiro some time this summer and sign a joint defense agreement, whereupon the United States, Congress permitting, will sell surplus and new war materials to the signatories in a planned effort to standardize weapons. Undoubtedly such standardization has technical merits, and for us it would offer certain advantages beyond the technical. Not only would it freeze out European arms manufacturers—always an appealing argument—but it would make the United States preeminent in Latin American military circles. It would be we who would replace parts, train men in the use of weapons, and presumably spread our influence where that of Germany was once so dominant.

But these advantages seem to us more theoretical than real. In the first place, a large number of our weapons

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would go to wealthy Argentina, which can readily dispense with our training, and will gladly dispense with our influence. Second, an increasingly powerful and expansionist Argentina will stimulate an arms race throughout Latin America, most of which is even now too impoverished to afford its people a minimum standard of decency in food, shelter, and education. And, finally, the program will greatly strengthen the military—no small consideration on a continent where politicians jockey for garrisons the way ours do for convention delegates. All in all, a high price to pay for questionable protection against an unlikely invader taking the least probable route of invasion.

Divided India

NO ONE will pretend that the judgment of Solomon which the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, has rendered on behalf of the British government is a perfect solution of the Indian problem. The unity of India is much more than a nationalist slogan. For a long period the country has been ruled and its economy developed on a centralized basis even though its constitution allowed for a considerable measure of local autonomy. Now it is to be divided into two and perhaps more sovereignties. The eggs are to be unscrambled, and the process is likely to prove costly to the Indian people.

Nevertheless, as Lord Mountbatten said in his radio address on June 3, unification could not be secured if it involved the coercion of minorities, and the "only alternative to coercion is partition." The Cabinet Mission plan for a centralized government with authority limited to defense, foreign affairs, and communications, leaving the provinces to be grouped according to their communal make-up and given very broad powers, was grudgingly accepted by both the Congress Party and the Moslem League. It passed into political limbo when the Moslems later returned to their demand for "full Pakistan," and savage and continued rioting broke out almost everywhere that Moslems and Hindus were in close contact.

It was this murderous strife which brought the mainly Hindu Congress to the reluctant conclusion that without partition the country would be plunged into a devastating civil war. "The united India we labored for," said Nehru in his indorsement of the Mountbatten proposals on June 3, "was not one of compulsion and coercion but a free and willing association of free people."

The surprise element in the Mountbatten plan was its announcement of Dominion status for both Indias as soon as the necessary legislation can be passed by the British Parliament. This promises almost immediate de facto independence, for although many Americans do not realize it, Dominion status confers full sovereignty, including the right of secession from the British Commonwealth. The new Indias, when they write their constitutions, can declare themselves independent republics if they wish, severing every connection with the British crown. Moreover, as Lord Mountbatten was at pains to make clear, there are no strings attached. There are to be no British bases in India and apparently no claim for special economic privileges. Britain, in fact, is retiring from India on terms that contrast very favorably with our self-advertised "generosity" to the Philippines.

While a basis for the peaceful transfer of power in India has been achieved, let no one think all will be smooth sailing from now on. The problems that remain to be solved are formidable and likely to cause plenty of friction. Delineation of the boundaries between Pakistan and Hindustan, for instance, will surely prove an arduous task, requiring prolonged bargaining. Then there is the question of communications. India is knitted together by a great network of railroads designed partly to satisfy defense requirements and partly to promote economic unification. To break up this network into two national systems would be absurd.

How are commercial relations between the two Indias to be conducted? The introduction of tariff barriers in what has been a great free-trade area would be a most retrograde step, costly to both states. Pakistan is likely to be a surplus food area; Hindustan will have most of India's industrial and mineral resources. The basis for a continued free exchange of goods remains. Yet there is a distinct danger that the Moslem area will follow a policy of economic nationalism and seek to acquire industrial strength by protective measures.

Another complication is provided by the princely states, large and small, with their more than 90,000,000 inhabitants. The British government has made it clear that "paramountcy" relations between the British crown and these states will lapse and that their rulers must come to terms on their own with the new Indias. They may try to establish complete independence but they cannot hope to attach themselves directly to the British Commonwealth. Most of the smaller states will probably agree to adhere to whichever of the two Indias surrounds them. But there are possibilities of trouble with such large states as Kashmir and Hyderabad. The former, with a mainly Moslem population but a Hindu ruling class, is contiguous with the western Moslem area. The latter, with a Hindu population and a Moslem ruler, lies in the heart of southern Hindustan. Any attempt by these two states to establish themselves as independent nations would be bitterly resisted.

We have touched here on only a few of the problems that face divided India. They are not insoluble provided that the two Indias tackle them in a spirit of genuine cooperation. Without that cooperation the future will be a stormy one; with it there is hope that India, free at last to develop along its own lines, will come to play an outstanding role in Asia and the world.

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Letter from Moscow

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Moscow, June 8

I HAVE not written to *The Nation* for some weeks because the situation here has continued rather fluid, with nothing much, as the phrase goes, to get one's teeth into. Now there are two things: Hungary and the aftermath of the Margate conference.

President Truman has just said that the present Hungarian situation is an "outrage" and that "the United States does not intend to stand idly by in the matter." Of course not. But why, it is asked here, before a full investigation of the facts, suggest that this is a red plot? If you question the British about it, they say, "Whatever one thinks of Russian methods of dealing with a situation of this kind, it is pretty certain there was a plot led by Bela Kovacs and involving several other leaders of the Smallholders' Party. The State Department jumped in last month with its fierce protest about Kovacs's arrest, and we as usual followed rather meekly; but we did not have a strong case. Since there was undoubtedly a plot, the Russians have a good prima facie case. Before jumping in with all fours we ought to see what the rights and wrongs are or we may look pretty silly when all the facts are known."

There is an uncomfortable feeling, however, among many diplomats here that "fact-finding" may not be the real problem any more. Isn't American "toughness" being exercised in places closer and closer to Russia's borders? Wherever there is opposition to the Russians or to pro-Russian governments, are not its leaders always confident of American support—whether their case is otherwise good or bad—and are they not always getting such support? Small wonder the Vienna commission set up by the Moscow conference is getting nowhere; the question of German assets is not really the key problem at all. One well-known Austrian here remarked the other day: "Nothing is simpler than the problem of German assets. Under the Russian formula the Russians are entitled to 180 plants, under the American formula to 100 plants. If they were willing to split the difference, the matter could be settled in five minutes. But that is no longer the real problem, and the coming clash over Hungary proves it conclusively.

The real danger now is the stimulation of a great political hullaballoo in Hungary which will inevitably cause a grave economic upset at the very time of year when bringing in the harvest is the country's first task. Hungary's harvest is particularly important, for Rumania, through an extraordinary run of bad luck, is having its third drought year in succession. Already half of its maize crop is reported ruined, and its livestock was slaughtered last winter on a disastrous scale.

I wrote last time about developments in the first few weeks after the Moscow conference. All the guns of the Soviet press, radio, theater, and screen were turned against America, while Britain was left in peace, and there were even numerous hints of Russia's desire for a rapprochement with it. At a public lecture in Moscow a well-known speaker talked on "The British Empire Today" and indicated that it was a factor of stability in the world and that not the Soviet Union but the United States was threatening its integrity. Who was the great enemy of imperial preference? America. Who was competing with British oil interests in the Middle East? America. Harold Wilson's trade mission was well received in Moscow. Eventual prospects seemed bright for large-scale British trade with a non-dollar area like the Soviet Union.

A few days before Margate, when Bevin made his Commons report on the Moscow conference, *Izvestia* came out with a four-column sledgehammer attack on the Foreign Secretary which was stronger than anything previously written against British foreign policy. On no point whatsoever did *Izvestia* agree with Bevin, and it came as near calling him a liar as diplomatic conventions permit. The attack on Bevin was fully as sharp as the attack on Marshall some time earlier. It had the effect on the Margate conference that could have been foreseen.

There was great disappointment here with the results of Margate. This could be seen in the prominence given to Harry Pollitt's article on the conference, which even criticized the Labor "rebels," insisting that they should try to influence "the masses"—the workshops and the trade unions—rather than "merely the readers of the *New Statesman and Nation*." All this is naturally linked with the topic which is dominating all Russian political reasoning today—America's diplomatic and "dollar" offensive. Perhaps it was decided that wooing England at this stage might only be interpreted as a sign of weakness.

Recent anti-British newspaper attacks have not been confined to Bevin. Several blasts were directed against the British press—even more than against the American press—because of articles by British correspondents who wrote their "inside Russia" stories after staying here seven weeks, mostly at the Moskva Hotel. Various kinds of articles appeared, but the Russians concentrated on the silliest and most malicious. As a result the Russian reader received a pretty hideous view of the British

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press. Undoubtedly many of the writers sneered unnecessarily at the shortage of food, housing, and consumer goods, which was attributed to the Russian system rather than to the war. Since then the *New Times* has come out with a statement that the censorship of foreign-press telegrams has only one purpose: to prevent misinformation, lies, and slander being printed about the Soviet Union abroad. One trusts this will be the consorship's immutable rule.

Meanwhile, the Russian people appear largely occupied with domestic affairs. They and the government are expecting to reap the reward of a particularly strenuous year in the form of a good harvest. In most parts of the country weather conditions have been reassuring. There has been a good deal of rain in the Volga country, the Don country, the North Caucasus, Central Russia, Siberia, and the greater part of the Ukraine—where the hot weather has now set in—and estimates of the harvest vary from "very fair" to "good." All this is important for Russia for various reasons—for example, the great difficulties which Rumania and Bulgaria may face owing to the drought in both countries. And there are other places, including England, where Soviet grain may be welcome.

Behind India's Crisis

BY SHIVA RAO

New Delhi, June 6

MOUNTBATTEN has scored a great personal triumph which may mark him as an outstanding contributor to world peace. Six months was the period originally granted him by Attlee to study the Indian situation and report back to the British Cabinet. It was widely stated that he had been given full discretion to make any variations in the British plan for India which might seem appropriate.

Within six weeks Mountbatten was convinced of two things: (1) The original plan for the transfer of power by June of next year was too slow. It required the assumption of an interim responsibility for the maintenance of peaceful conditions which British authorities were finding it increasingly difficult to discharge. From his talks with Indian leaders Mountbatten realized that the transfer of power must be begun sooner if the rapid deterioration of conditions was to be arrested. (2) The original plan for a single federal authority for the whole of India—the "union center" with power over defense, foreign affairs, and communications—had no chance of acceptance by Jinnah and the Moslem League. They refused to compromise on their demand for the division of India and therefore would not enter the Constituent Assembly.

The Cabinet time-table for India—first a new constitution framed by a single constituent assembly and then the taking over of power next June—obviously could not be carried through. Mountbatten made repeated attempts to persuade Jinnah of the dangers inherent in a division of the country, which meant also a division of the armed forces. In these prolonged talks he made not the slightest impression. Indeed, at a late stage Jinnah introduced a new demand for a corridor a thousand miles long between Eastern and Western Pakistan.

Mountbatten saw only too clearly that without some measure of cooperation from the Moslem League the transfer of power next year would mean catastrophic civil war. The large-scale riots throughout northern India from Calcutta to Peshawar seemed only a rehearsal for yet greater bloodshed. The abandonment of the original British plan, however distasteful, struck him as a painful necessity. Patiently but with quick decision he worked out a new plan, "at every stage and every step inviting the cooperation of the Indian leaders," as he revealed at a press conference in New Delhi earlier this week.

The Congress leaders, while insisting that the work of the Constituent Assembly go on, were wedded to the principle of coercing no areas into accepting the authority of the federal center. But they insisted that the principle applied with equal force to those parts of Bengal and the Punjab which, being non-Moslem, would not consent to inclusion within Pakistan. Jinnah resolutely refused to agree to a truncated Pakistan as economically impracticable. Gandhi, a passionate believer in the unity of India, preached the gospel of non-violence in the face of unexampled mob fury. Then, suddenly and characteristically, he called on the British to quit India immediately instead of waiting until next June. To Jinnah he said: Convince us of the soundness and desirability of Pakistan after the British withdrawal; everything would be yielded to reason but nothing to force.

Meanwhile the situation was rapidly getting worse. Arson, murder, and stabbings became common happenings; bombs, hand grenades, tommy-guns, rifles, and revolvers seemed abundantly available. The movements of the rioters revealed skill and experience in organized warfare. The food situation caused anxiety. India's wheat crop had been poor, and the shortage of food grains this year is estimated at four and a half million tons—about 15 per cent of the normal production. Strikes have cur-

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tailed cloth production by eight hundred million yards, or one-sixth the annual output of the textile industry. The cost of living shows little sign of coming down, the index of wholesale prices last week being 250.

Mountbatten took one of those "calculated risks" which he said he had learned to take in Southeast Asia during the war. Jinnah wanted a second constituent assembly and the partition of India. Very well, he could have both, but the lines of division would be decided only after the wishes of the people concerned had been ascertained. Next week in all probability the Bengal and Punjab legislatures will meet and vote on the division of these provinces into Moslem and non-Moslem areas. It will be a rough-and-ready process based upon accepting the census figures of 1941 as correct. Later a boundary commission will be appointed to demarcate the areas with greater precision.

The Northwest Frontier Province, though overwhelmingly Moslem, has a Congress ministry wielding authority. Jinnah wanted its dissolution and the absorption of the province into Western Pakistan. Mountbatten, in rejecting this demand, made the concession that the issue would be decided by a referendum. Similarly in Assam, bordering on Burma, a referendum will be held in Sylhet, which has a Moslem majority. The utmost that Jinnah can expect from this balloting is a truncated Pakistan consisting of Sind, with its great airport and harbor at Karachi, the western Punjab, the Northwest Frontier Province, eastern Bengal, and Sylhet. Presumably he has reconciled himself to such an outcome since he cannot obtain more without bloodshed. He had cautiously recommended the Mountbatten plan to his followers as the best possible under present circumstances.

The Congress leaders for their part can go forward with their task of framing a permanent constitution without the handicaps imposed by the Cabinet mission's plan. For instance, the powers of the union center need not be restricted to foreign affairs, defense, and communications as was originally contemplated. However, partition of the country, as Nehru confessed "with a heavy heart" in a broadcast two days ago, is not a pleasant prospect. He sought comfort in the hope that after a taste of it "India might still reach that conception of unity sooner than otherwise," and the unity might have more secure foundations.

As seen by Oscar Berger

Nehru

Gandhi has finally reconciled himself to partition. Through the grant of dominion status, he has obtained in substance his demand for an immediate British withdrawal—by the middle of August British control over India's administration will be replaced by that of two dominion governments. Even this seems to him inadequate compensation for the division of the country, but Mountbatten did not go farther than to accept the Congress Party's resolution indorsing the principle.

The Sikhs, perhaps more than any other major party, have reason to feel dissatisfied with the latest proposals. They have been supporting partition of the Punjab, but the line of demarcation cuts their homeland into two equal halves and leaves an important center like Lahore in Western Pakistan. There is talk of resistance, though many Sikh leaders realize that no compromise solution of such a complex problem can satisfy all parties. The surprise is that Mountbatten has come so near an ideal solution that both here and in London it has received overwhelming support, even Churchill and the diehard Tories accepting it.

Recent experiences, however, are a warning against easy optimism. At least twice in the course of the last twelve months British proposals have met with a favorable reception, only to be rejected by Jinnah. Next week the Congress Party and the Moslem League will pronounce their final verdicts on the Mountbatten plan. It seems safe to prophesy that both organizations will support it despite its obvious defects.

What the princes will do is a question. Mountbatten has told them plainly enough that they must join one of the two constituent assemblies and rely no more on British protection. Several princes have prudently already taken steps to fall in line. Some, however, under the influence of reactionary British officials who have been so long in India that they fail to appreciate world trends, are perversely holding out and threaten to declare their independence of both Pakistan and Hindustan. But the princes are perhaps a comparatively minor factor in the Indian problem.

In normal times one would say that the promise of full dominion status by the middle of August was a step of revolutionary proportions. But times are abnormal. India's administration for months past has been running dangerously slow because of political uncertainty, economic discontent, and Hindu-Moslem strife.

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Nehru, in expressing his determination to suppress "shameful, degrading, and revolting violence," condemned the use of violence to achieve political ends. A similar condemnation was evoked from Jinnah, though it sounded inadequate and mild.

The boldness of Mountbatten's solution, his resourcefulness and amazing energy, has won him enormous regard throughout India. If these qualities enable him to prevent further civil strife, not only will India be spared untold horrors, but there will be hope, in Nehru's words, of "building anew our relations with England on a friendly and cooperative basis, forgetting the past which has lain so heavily upon us." Mountbatten may yet do for India what Lord Durham did for Canada.

The Battle of A. V. C.

BY DANIEL JAMES

ONE year ago a thousand vocal, idealistic young men and women gathered at Des Moines, Iowa, to launch formally the most impressive of the new World War II veterans' organizations—the American Veterans Committee. A program of progressive aims and principles was hammered out. Democracy prevailed in the elections. At the same time a sharp undercover struggle was fought between the Communists and the national leadership, and while the non-Communist forces succeeded in reelecting Gilbert A. Harrison as vice-chairman, their opponents were only temporarily downed.

A decisive battle between these elements will almost certainly take place when the A. V. C. convenes in Milwaukee next Thursday. Since Des Moines the Communist issue has become crucial. In certain parts of New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois it has received more attention at chapter, city, and state meetings than housing, employment, or education. At times the smoldering dissension has burst into the open, as when Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., attacked A. V. C.'s Communists in a widely reported speech last January. In fact, A. V. C. now harbors two highly organized, opposing factions which are preparing feverishly for Milwaukee.

Like many Americans, A. V. C. members are concerned with the mounting anti-red hysteria, which threatens also to inundate progressivism. They rightly sense the danger of a real fascist movement inherent in it. And like many liberals, therefore, these "citizens first" have been worried lest opposition to communism provide grist for the fascist mill. But experience has shown the veterans in A. V. C. that there is a fancied menace manufactured by the enemies of progress and a real menace confronting them in their daily organizational life; that while they fight totalitarianism without, they are being weakened by totalitarians within; and that at some point being a liberal means repudiating the false premises of both extremes and planting one's feet firmly upon a third path.

DANIEL JAMES, a rank-and-file member of the A. V. C., was formerly on the staff of Army Talk.

The Battle of A. V. C. began early in 1946 when the Communist Party began seriously to "infiltrate" the organization. Regarding the ex-service man as a particularly vital force, the Communists are determined to exert as much influence over him as possible. In the event of a national crisis, not to speak of another war, America's fifteen million veterans may overnight become the nation's most important bloc. Whoever leads any sizable articulate and organized fraction of these millions can conceivably wield great power of decision.

Toward the end of the war the Communists decided to try to capture the American Legion, which they believed would eventually contain a preponderance of youthful World War II veterans who could be activated against the old Legion bureaucracy. But while they set their sights on the great wealth, powerful machinery, and community standing of the Legion, they had no intention of neglecting other groups. In the August, 1946, issue of the Communist Party organ, *Political Affairs*, John Gates, chairman of the party's Veterans' Committee, wrote, "Progressive-minded veterans, especially trade-union veterans, should follow the lead of the Communist veterans . . . [who] are increasingly active in *all* veterans' organizations, including, and not the least of all, the Legion and the V. F. W., and seek to unite all veterans in the struggle."

Inside the Legion the party made a special effort to capture the National Conference of Union Labor Legionnaires and to weld all pro-labor elements into a single power bloc. To corral another potent force, the Negro, it established what amounts to a segregated group of its own, the United Negro and Allied Veterans of America. And to entice members of other minorities, it organized Veterans Against Discrimination. Boring from within and pressuring from without, the Communists early resolved to have a finger in every veterans' pie.

When A. V. C. made its modest start, the Commu-

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nists thought they could afford to ignore it. They became irritated, however, as soon as the new group promised to attract those most useful to the party's ends, the progressives. They accused A. V. C. of "dividing" the veterans and especially of diverting the liberal-minded from their main task, which was "to unite all veterans" in the Legion or the Veterans of Foreign Wars. When Charles Bolté's book, "The New Veteran" was published, various literary hatchet-men went to work on it. Walter Bernstein, a former *Yank* correspondent, wrote such a slanted and inaccurate review of it for *The Nation* that the editors found it necessary to invite his ex-colleague on *Yank*, Merle Miller, to present the other side of the case in the same issue. Bernstein's chief complaint was that A. V. C., while "noble in purpose," could "easily become isolated from the mass of veterans."

But A. V. C. did not become "isolated." Throughout the demobilization period it grew at the rate of 500, then 1,500, then 2,500 a week. And its physical growth was outstripped by its mounting influence. A. V. C.'s counsels were heeded by the nation's legislators. It was the only veterans' organization to testify at the Senate hearing on full employment. It was the first to launch a veterans' housing campaign. It was credited with responsibility for breaking down the navy's barriers against Nisei enlistments. Bolté was news almost daily. Diverse national figures like Harold Stassen, the late Evans Carlson, and Marshall Field, Jr., became members. A. V. C. had become a force and was here to stay.

The Communist position changed accordingly. Within a few months—to judge from the line taken by the *Daily Worker* at any rate—it swung from bitter enmity to excessive ardor. In November, 1945, the Communist daily mentioned A. V. C. only four times, once most disparagingly in a review of Bolté's book. By March, 1946, a month in which more than 10,000 ex-soldiers joined A. V. C., it was giving the young organization three or four pats on the back weekly. By May, when A. V. C.'s membership had shot up to over 50,000, the *Daily Worker* was positively coddling it with a plug a day. A pre-convention interview with Bolté in the issue of June 2, 1946, did as much to build up the national chairman as another article had done a few months earlier to knock him down.

By May, 1946, the party had sent the bulk of its available forces into A. V. C. At about the same time the New York City chapters planned to hold their first convention. Here was a chance for the party to make its initial bid for power. Hundreds of delegates who met to draw up a platform and write a constitution never knew what hit them. The Communists, with the advantage of surprise, a tightly disciplined machine, aggressive leadership, and long experience in boring from within, achieved a victory which shook both New York and the national organization to their foundations.

Caricature by Seligson

Charles G. Bolté

The next step, planned as the final one, was to be the seizure of the national machinery. Early in the spring of 1946 a document attacking Harrison, founder of A. V. C., was circulated among the national membership. Its arguments were repeated in prolific correspondence and in speeches made by leaders later found in the pro-Communist camp. By June the Communist caucus, A. V. C.'s first, was fully organized, and Harrison had emerged as its special hate, a symbol of the supposed "conservatism" of A. V. C.'s national administration. (His real crime, it developed afterward, was that he had been one of the first to sound the alarm against the Communists.) Frederick Borden, a publicity man for the National Citizens' Political Action Committee, became the darling of the "progressives" because he claimed to represent a militant "leftist" approach. Thus the Communists and their allies deliberately destroyed the broad agreement on liberal objectives on which the organization's existence was predicated. Borden now entered on a struggle with Harrison for the vice-chairmanship.

Meanwhile, what of Chairman Charles G. Bolté? Though he was denounced by the Communists, Bolté's prestige in A. V. C. was unharmed. No figure of equal stature had arisen to challenge him. Knowing he would be elected at Des Moines, the Communists decided to make it unanimous. Their strategy was to contest the vice-chairmanship, elect as many of their men as possible to the National Planning Committee, and try later to make Bolté their "front" man and captive.

But the Communists had pushed A. V. C. too hard. The other delegates did not want the nation to go like New York. They organized at the eleventh hour. Bolté publicly announced his support of Harrison. Borden suddenly came out for "unity" and withdrew in favor of a "compromise" candidate. Harrison won comfortably, and the party's adherents were lucky to gain a third of the seats on the N. P. C.

The continuing undercover struggle was brought into the open in November by the passage of an anti-Communist resolution by the National Planning Committee, which is A. V. C.'s ruling body. The vote was fifteen for, four against, with five abstaining for tactical reasons. When the resolution was submitted to a national referendum, it was supported by nearly two-thirds of all A. V. C. members. The opposing third consisted of out-

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right Communists (least in number), close sympathizers, fringe friends, and confused liberals.

Organized opposition to the Communists now increased, and early this year it became obvious that they were in retreat. But Communists admit neither retreat nor defeat. Having failed to take the fortress by storm, they are now stealing up on it by the devious paths of "unity." This is the current aspect of their campaign in A. V. C. Epithets like "left" and "right" are now used apologetically, only by way of explanation. True, the national leaders are still attacked as reactionaries, but other approaches receive greater emphasis. Lesser leaders are visited and built up, independents are taken out to lunch, all and sundry are begged to sit down and discuss calmly how to do away with factions—that is, all factions but the Communists.

Twelve months ago the siren call of "unity" might have brought thunderous applause from A. V. C.'s rank and file. Today it falls on deaf ears. A year of internal warfare has taught the average A. V. C. member most of what he ought to know about Communist techniques. Some have fallen by the wayside, unable to stomach the in-fighting. But the majority are no longer a disorganized mob battling against a disciplined army; they are themselves a trained and disciplined force.

In a double sense these A. V. C. independents carry a heavy responsibility. If they defeat the Communists at Milwaukee—and there is reason to believe they will—then A. V. C. will have a second chance to grow into the great veterans' movement it ought to be. At the same time the victory will lend new courage to those outside A. V. C. who are fighting the same battle.

Is Life Insurance Healthy?

BY MARTIN GUMPERT

HEALTH education is in great danger of falling into the hands of high-pressure advertising agencies and their copywriters. The National Health Council's Gunn-Platt report on "Voluntary Health Agencies" strongly criticized uncoordinated attacks on specific diseases, but new groups and campaigns are still springing up like mushrooms. The New York Medical Society expressed its concern over the situation in an article in its official publication called The Atomization of the Health Education Movement. We now have fund-raising foundations to combat tuberculosis, heart disease, venereal disease, mental illness, old age, infant mortality, infantile paralysis, rheumatic fever, hypertension, arthritis, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, alcoholism, multiple sclerosis, Hodgkin's disease, birth palsy, and high blood pressure; and the list cannot claim to be complete. Too many of these agencies base their money-rising compaigns on the fears they arouse. Indeed, one of the biggest advertising firms, we are told, has hired a famous scholar as a specialist in the psychology of fear. Practicing physicians are greatly disturbed by the unfortunate effects on their patients of this stimulated anxiety about their health.

We have just witnessed, for instance, the overstatements of the anti-cancer campaign. The fact is that the death rate from cancer has been steadily declining in recent years—see the *Statistical Bulletin* of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company for April, 1947.

Another aspect of the situation is brought out by the following case-history, which could be duplicated many times. An intelligent and sensitive patient who has been subjected to anti-cancer propaganda notices a small tumor. He has just been implored by film stars and advertising writers to ask for immediate medical attention. The doctor, though the tumor looks completely harmless, recommends surgical removal and microscopic inspection of the tissue in order to cure the aroused cancer fear of his patient. The small operation is performed, and the laboratory findings completely confirm the benign character of the tumor. The patient then forgets about the incident—until, a few years later, he applies for life insurance, answers his questionnaire conscientiously, and is rejected as a bad risk.

To many people getting or not getting a life-insurance policy seems to mean life or death. Rejection as a bad risk starts in them a severe traumatic neurosis. The judgments of the medical supreme court set up by the private insurance business are a greater interference with a doctor's sacrosanct relationship to his patient than any system of compulsory insurance against sickness could ever be.

I am not the only doctor concerned about the psychological effect of rejections by insurance companies on sensitive patients. Dr. H. T. Hyman in his "Integrated Practice of Medicine" says: "The practitioner often finds himself in conflict with the life-insurance investigators and their medical staffs. . . . Confidence and faith in the physician are undermined through the stupidity of attempting an art [the art of prognosis] in terms of

MARTIN GUMPERT, a New York physician, contributes a monthly page on interesting developments in medicine and related fields.

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mathematics." The rejected patient, of course, believes that his doctor has withheld from him the gravity of his condition.

I think this situation deserves the serious consideration of both insurance companies and physicians. Intelligent patients responding to the exhortations of our public-health propaganda in a conscientious and rational manner, as did the patient with the tumor, ought at least to know that they are exposing themselves to punitive action by an insurance company. Automatic classification of such cases as bad risks is not only contrary to all reason but conducive to unnecessary emotional shock.

Before I sat down to write this article I asked the advice of the medical director of one of the biggest insurance companies in the country, and I am sorry that I cannot quote his whole pro-insurance reply. This official recognizes the need for greater cooperation between insurance physician and private physician, but he maintains that "a policy is a contract, and a person is not bound to apply to any particular company for his insurance; nor is the insurance company bound to issue the insurance as applied for . . . our rules are not as autocratic as you suggest."

I am not in a position to solve this problem. I feel that the activities of life-insurance companies belong in the domain of public interest. I feel that their statistical and clinical techniques for medical evaluation of life expectancy lag far behind the latest medical knowledge and are largely based on mechanical and scientifically unsatisfactory tests and figures. The relationship between life and death is a very sensitive one. The evaluation of a person's biological age and life expectancy, in contrast to his chronological age, is probably medicine's most urgent problem and the one in which the least progress has been made. The price of life insurance has only recently been partly adjusted to the tremendous extension of our life expectancy. Previously it was based on antiquated and incorrect—and from the standpoint of the customer unfair—census tables.

Ways and means must be found to prevent our valuable life-insurance system from becoming a danger to public and individual health. Perhaps some method of impartial arbitration might be set up, conducted by neutral physicians who could reach a compromise between the business interests of the company and the responsibilities of the physician for his patient. The whole system of acceptance or rejection should be reorganized; each case should receive at least as much individual consideration as draftees received from the Selective Service authorities. There should be opportunities for appeal, with a reasonable chance of success, in cases of alleged injustice. Exchanges of opinion should be possible between company and private physicians.

Everybody might derive more benefit from the institution of insurance if the companies would realize that death is something more than a financial risk.

Bright Spot in the West

BY CAREY McWILLIAMS

Denver, June 2

IN THE prevailing gloom of November, 1946, Western liberals and progressives overlooked the one bright spot on the political scene. In Colorado, the Republican Congressman from the Denver district, Dean Gillespie, who might best be described as a caricature of the Republican politician at his inimitable worst, was replaced by John Carroll, a liberal Democrat, and the Republican Governor, John Vivian, was defeated by the Democratic candidate, W. Lee Knous. The victories of Carroll and Knous were generally ascribed at the time to the maladroit leadership of the Colorado Republicans, notably Governor Vivian, who had been repudiated by his own party. But today there is reason to believe that the reaction against the G. O. P. was not a mere convulsive spasm but the start of a new trend in Rocky Mountain politics.

Recently the citizens of Denver, turning out in record numbers, elected Quigg Newton mayor by an impressive margin. Supported by a coalition of forces, Newton received more than 80,000 votes, nearly double the number cast for the runner-up, United States District Attorney Tom Morrissey, a Truman–Tom Clark Democrat. Ben Stapleton, the incumbent, who with minor interruptions has bossed municipal politics in Denver for twenty years, received only 17,551 votes, though he was supported by the A. F. of L.; District Judge William A. Black, who was backed by the Republican stalwarts, only 5,203. William Dietrich, said to have been the candidate of the Communist Party, got a mere 400. Newton's striking victory was probably due less to the general dissatisfaction with the Stapleton machine than to the breadth of the coalition that supported his candidacy. He was indorsed by both the Denver *Post* and the *Rocky Mountain News*, and his campaign was actively aided by the Railroad Brotherhoods, the C. I. O., and the important Rocky Mountain Social Action Council (now affiliated with the Progressive Citizens of America).

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Quigg Newton, thirty-five years old, is the youngest mayor in Denver's political history; he is also the first native son to be elected to the office. After graduating from the Yale Law School, he served for a time as legal assistant to William O. Douglas in the Securities Exchange Commission. At the end of the war, in which he served as a commander in the navy, he opened a law office in Denver, became active in civic affairs, and in 1946 was voted "Denver's outstanding young man" by the Junior Chamber of Commerce. His wife is the daughter of former United States Senator Shafroth, long active in Democratic politics. Newton is personally attractive and has considerable wealth. His father, a pioneer Colorado lumberman, was a prominent advocate of public housing in Denver; Newton himself has studied the subject in Europe and might be rated a "professional." Everyone in Denver with whom I discussed his election expressed complete confidence in his integrity and believed that he would make an excellent administrator. While not a liberal on all issues, Newton has revealed a real interest in minorities, housing, governmental reforms, and the establishment of a pattern of civilized industrial relations.

There is a strong current of rebellion in Denver against the "let-things-alone" position of the city's aging financial oligarchs. As State Senator Arthur Brooks, a young liberal Republican, phrased it, "The voters recognize that Denver is now a modern industrial city and no longer primarily a nice place for retired Western capitalists to spend their declining years in." In no Western city is there a more wide-awake attention to regional, national, and international issues than in Denver, which recently welcomed 1,700 delegates to the UNESCO conference. On May 24 more than a hundred delegates attended the conference of the Colorado Unity Council, such outlying cities and towns as Rocky Ford, La Junta, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, and Boulder being well represented. California is the only other state which has such a state-wide civic council. I attended the conference and was deeply impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of the delegates.

The new trend in Colorado politics dates from 1944 when Charles A. Graham conducted a brilliant but unsuccessful fight to unseat the incredible Gillespie. The campaign unquestionably paved the way for the victory of Carroll last year. Graham, a young lawyer, was formerly with the NLRB and for a time acted as regional director of the War Labor Board. He is a leading spirit in the Rocky Mountain Social Action Council, which issued from a conference on atomic power called in Denver in 1945. The council is largely made up of business and professional men. I visited its headquarters during the November, 1946, election and admired the energetic way in which Phil Reno, its executive, was helping to elect John Carroll. Professors from the University of Denver were stuffing envelopes, carrying on a telephone campaign, and reporting on the precincts for which they were responsible. I detected none of the aggravated in-fighting, as much personal as ideological, which makes the life of a liberal in Southern California a succession of embittered caucuses and midnight plottings. The political activities of the Rocky Mountain Social Action Council appear to be rooted in issues immediately affecting the West, whereas in Southern California liberals who will rally for Greece at the drop of a hat hardly know that the Central Valley project exists or that the city of Los Angeles faces an acute water and power shortage in the next decade.

Most of the ferment in Colorado finds expression through the Democratic Party, but some promising stirrings can be discovered in Republican circles. The Republican Party in the state has long been bossed by the "Seventeenth Street Gang," which includes spokesmen of the Great Western Sugar Beet Company and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. One man, Lawrence Phipps, from the time that he acquired a seat in the United States Senate until his retirement from active political life some years ago, made most of the important decisions for the party in Colorado. To such an extent was this true that minor party officials and leaders suffered from acute frustration. No new leaders were developed; Senator Phipps always hand-picked the candidates. Like a baseball team that has permitted its farm system to disintegrate, the Republican machine in Colorado is today in a state of genteel decomposition—witness the miserable showing of its candidate in the mayoralty election.

This state of affairs offers opportunities which may well be seized by some young and able liberal Republican. Arthur Brooks, whom I mentioned above, led the fight for a state F. E. P. C. in the legislature and is credited with having defeated a measure to outlaw the closed shop. Gifford Phillips, who made a success of his first publishing venture, *Rocky Mountain Life*, now owns and operates a radio station in Pueblo and has ambitious plans for a chain of radio stations and rural newspapers. Interestingly enough, these young liberals seem to be about midway between Stassen and Wallace in their general political point of view.

Although Truman is probably assured of the Democratic nomination, many things can happen between now and convention time in 1948. If a popular revolt against Truman should be organized, it would have a better chance of success in the West than in any other region. Nowhere else perhaps are party loyalties taken so lightly; or do local political interests cut so sharply across party lines. A Western states' conference of labor and liberal forces is being frequently discussed at the moment. It might be the means of organizing a Western revolt against Truman.

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Del Vayo—"Report from Spain"

MY UNCHANGING theory that the American people are much wiser in their approach to foreign affairs than is their government is confirmed by an important and timely book just published—"Report from Spain" (Holt, $3). The author, Emmet John Hughes, now chief of the *Time-Life* bureau in Rome, can hardly be dismissed as a red. His first book, "The Church and the Liberal Society," was a Catholic Book-of-the-Month Club selection. He has told us how in Spain he attended "Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of the four years I passed there." Mr. Hughes left the diplomatic service to enlist in the army and was reassigned to Madrid as a member of Military Intelligence. From that vantage point he has written one of the most conclusive studies we have of that fascist regime which has survived the military defeat of fascism. His book combines good journalism with the inside knowledge he gained in the service.

Mr. Hughes begins with a quotation describing the Franco regime taken from the standard elementary textbook used today throughout Spain, "El Curso Completo de Primera Enseñanzas": "Spain is a totalitarian country and its Chief is His Excellency the Caudillo, Generalissimo of the land, sea, and air forces, and Chief of the Government." His portrait of the dictator is exact and sharp: "Short in stature, with that abdominal curvature that delights caricaturists, smiling rather lamely, a bit like an unwilling and inarticulate toastmaster at a big banquet." Franco is a devoted Catholic, in the opinion of Mr. Hughes, and yet "in the entire bleak history of Nazism not a single instance is known when the champion of Spanish Catholicism suggested, either publicly or through diplomatic channels, even a modest concern over the Nazi Party's persecution of the church."

A monarchist, too, but on the condition that he himself shall embody the monarchical principle. Mr. Hughes wrote his book before Franco had announced his cynical law of succession—just ratified by acclamation in the Spanish "Parliament"—which makes him at once king, regent, and dictator. But Mr. Hughes does report that some time ago two generals and an admiral called on Franco to persuade him to restore the monarchy. "Franco rose slowly from his seat, stalked around the desk to confront the men at close range, and with the most violent gesticulations delivered the shrill harangue: 'You, too! You do not understand that the monarchy is *lo parcial* and my regime is *lo total*. I am here to fulfil a divine mandate, and any contrary maneuver is an act against Spain itself.'" That was in 1943, before Franco dreamed about becoming the ally of the democracies in their primary post-war job of stopping Russia.

In the light of that incident and as a result of a thorough survey of Franco's entourage, the army, and the Falange, it is futile, as Mr. Hughes shows, to hope for a change in which Franco will bow and disappear from the stage and the Spanish democrats—not too democratic—will take his place peacefully and in complete array.

Mr. Hughes's analysis of Anglo-American policy toward Spain from "the period of long-range verbal artillery beginning with the San Francisco conference" until last December, when the Assembly of the United Nations passed its resolution recommending the recall of ambassadors from that country, is the best part of the book. The report of the inevitable reactions to that policy inside Spain, which he himself witnessed, confirms all that has been published in *The Nation* in the last few years. "No intention of interfering in Spanish affairs? That sounds strangely like democratic policy toward the civil war, out of which Franco battled his way to power. And if the democracies have no such intention, why are they issuing a note [the statement of the Western powers of March 4, 1946] urging the Spanish people to change their own government?" Two years of fear, of vacillation, of bold but empty words, have led to a situation in which Franco is stronger than ever. "The post-war policy of the Western democracies, the policy of our State Department," says Mr. Hughes, "has registered utter failure in its announced purpose of speeding political evolution in Spain."

The aim of that policy, expressed in frequent statements of British and American spokesmen, was twofold: to avoid the risk of civil war in Spain, and to deprive communism of any chance to win ascendancy there. A new civil war has almost been imposed upon the Spanish people by the strategy of keeping Franco in power, and nine years after the first civil war he is enforcing one of the most cruel repressions of his entire era. Stop communism? "Every month, every week, every day," writes Mr. Hughes, "the prestige and power of Spanish communism are growing. Soviet Russia is not achieving it. We—the Western democracies—are doing it." Anglo-American policy has left the forces of Spanish democracy without support, with little reason for hope, and with no sure knowledge even of its political purpose. A detailed and extremely intelligent analysis of every major Allied "decision" on Spain leads this serious and responsible commentator to one conclusion: "If Spain does matter to the United States [he gives dozens of reasons to prove that it does], if we wish to see the Falangist state destroyed, if our national interests would not be well served by a Communist Spain, if we hope to help the Spanish people escape another civil war, for their sake and that of the world, then it is time to do something a little more impressive than issue verbal manifestoes and to speak phrases that make more sense than to instruct 'patriotic Spaniards' to seek out and 'find means' to effect a 'peaceful withdrawal' of General Franco."

"Report from Spain" should be read by every American who wants a real knowledge of one of the most crucial issues in Europe today, and it should also be read by the members of the Security Council of the United Nations, from whom we await another report on the Spanish problem—the report on what each member state has done to fulfil the recommendations of the December resolution.

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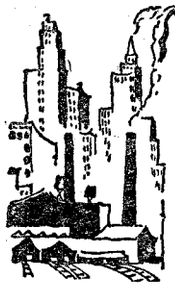

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Oil: East and West

IT IS too bad that the newspapers are giving so little attention to the hearings on the Anglo-American Petroleum Agreement which, after many postponements, started this week before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Superficially they may seem of interest only to the oil industry, which is acutely divided about the merits of the agreement. But actually the problems of oil politics and economics under discussion are of vital interest to everybody.

At first sight the agreement, concluded in London in September, 1945, appears an innocuous and non-controversial document. In the first place, it affirms two general principles which hardly anyone would care to challenge: (a) adequate supplies of petroleum should be accessible in international trade to all countries "on a competitive and non-discriminatory basis"; (b) the interests of producing countries should be safeguarded "with a view to their economic advancement." Secondly, it provides for the establishment of an international petroleum commission with purely fact-finding and consultative functions. In the words of Harold L. Ickes, who headed the American negotiators of the agreement, this commission "will operate as the forum to which the problems of the international petroleum trade can be brought, threshed out openly and frankly, and the way pointed to their *voluntary* solution." The commission will have no powers to compel action either by the signatory powers or by any of their nationals.

In the light of this summary it may be hard to understand why the State Department should regard the treaty as a matter of prime importance, and, equally, why the "independent" oil interests of this country should consider it a deadly menace. The only possible explanation seems to be that there is more in the agreement than meets the eye and that its innocent phraseology masks an understanding for a friendly division of the world's oil resources between the big American and British trusts, an understanding reached with the tacit blessing of both governments. At any rate, it is noteworthy that in the twenty months since the document was signed, plans for the joint exploitation of the great Middle Eastern fields, whose reserves exceed those of the United States, have advanced rapidly.

Standard Oil of New Jersey and Socony have made a long-term contract with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company for bulk purchase of crude oil and have undertaken to help finance a pipe line from its fields to the Mediterranean. These same two companies, together with their British, Dutch, and French partners in the Iraq Petroleum Company, have decided to duplicate the existing line carrying oil from northern Iraq to Haifa and Tripoli. The British Shell company has made a bulk-purchase contract with Gulf Oil, which has a half-interest in the newly opened Kuwait field. Finally the "Red Line" agreement has been abrogated, which enables Standard of New Jersey and Socony to buy into the Arabian-American Company now exploiting the vast Saudi Arabian concessions. This last move caused trouble with the French, who felt they were being squeezed out by an Anglo-American deal, but they have been pacified by promises of a larger share of an increased Iraq output.

As a result of all these arrangements hundreds of millions of dollars are to be invested in drilling new wells in the various Middle Eastern fields, in building refineries and other facilities, and in laying pipe lines. Within five years, it is believed, present daily production of the area—750,000 barrels—may be doubled, making it possible to meet all Europe's petroleum requirements. Thus even if the Anglo-American agreement is never ratified, the bogy of the American independents—a large competing supply of oil—is well on the way to realization.

In their propaganda against the agreement the independents have stressed this fear less than their claim that it would lead to increased federal interference with the industry. To support this charge they point to Article II, the only section which applies to the domestic petroleum industry. It declares "that the exploration for and development of petroleum resources, the construction and operation of refineries and other facilities, and the distribution of petroleum shall not be hampered by restrictions inconsistent with the purposes of this agreement." This clause appears to be a declaration against discriminatory treatment by the signatory powers of each other's oil concerns, and it is difficult to see how it could become an entering wedge for federal control of the industry. However, it might be regarded as barring the restriction of oil imports—for instance, by a quota arrangement for which the independents are beginning to agitate. This possibility may well be the nub of the opposition to the agreement.

The split of opinion between the major oil companies, with their world-wide interests, and the smaller independents, which produce only for the domestic market, is not hard to explain. The majors, noting a shift in the center of gravity of world oil from the Gulf of Mexico–Caribbean area to the Persian Gulf area, are in a position to adjust their operations accordingly. Hitherto they have supplied their distribution networks in Europe largely from the fields they own in Venezuela and Colombia. In the future they propose to draw instead on the cheap production of the Middle East and so free Caribbean resources for consumption in this hemisphere, including the United States.

This prospect fills the independents with alarm. They see costs rising, as oil becomes harder to find in this country, but prices held down by the competition of cheap foreign oil. Hence they are looking for more protection than the present tariff of 10½ cents a barrel affords. As rugged individualists they scorn government interference with their business, but they are eager enough for government interference with the consumer's business—the purchase of oil as cheaply as possible. Attempting to justify this attitude, they constantly challenge the widely held belief that dwindling American oil resources make increased imports both desirable and inevitable. Next week I shall endeavor to show why I think the facts are against them.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

WILLA CATHER

BY MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

TWENTY years ago, at fifty, Willa Cather stood at the height of her career, with fifteen years of her best work behind her and her most popular book, "Death Comes for the Archbishop," claiming an unstinted admiration. When she died at seventy, on April 24, she had already come to appear as the survivor of some distant generation, remote from the talents and problems of the past two anxious decades. This estrangement could have been no surprise to her. It was of her own choice and election. In 1936 she admitted that her writing could have "little interest for people under forty years of age. The world broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts," and it was to "the backward, and by one of their number," that she addressed her later books. She had, in fact, so addressed her work ever since she first found her real bearings in authorship, with "O Pioneers!" in 1913. Backwardness was with her not only a matter of material and temperament. It was the condition of her existence as an artist.

She was one of the last in the long line of commemorators and elegists of American innocence and romantic heroism that virtually dates from the beginnings of a conscious native artistry in American literature. Her books were elegies, and Irving, Cooper, Hawthorne, Twain, and Sarah Orne Jewett figure in their ancestry. When, on rare occasions, she praised her fellow-craftsmen, from Miss Jewett to Katherine Mansfield, Thornton Wilder, or even Thomas Mann (who "belongs immensely to the forward-goers. . . . But he also goes back a long way, and his backwardness is more gratifying to the backward"), it was usually because they also turned to the past and rooted their values there.

She was quite aware of the false and bogus uses to which the historical sentiment had been put in American fiction. Its products surrounded her in the early nineteen hundreds when she was feeling her way toward her career: "machine-made historical novels," "dreary dialect stories," "very dull and heavy as clay"—books by John Fox, Jr., James Lane Allen, Mary Johnstone, and their successful competitors, the memory of which today is like "taking a stroll through a World's Fair grounds some years after the show is over." She knew Miss Jewett shone like a star in that lusterless company, that Henry James "was surely the keenest mind any American ever devoted to the art of fiction," that Stephen Crane "had done something real." She also had to learn the secret of their distinction the hard way. She came out of the West attracted by the prairie girl's mirage of the East—its cities, salons, opera houses, studios, Beacon Hill sanctities, Atlantic liners, with the shrines of Europe beyond. Her early stories, many never collected in her books, are full of this worshipful glamour, and she was past thirty-five when she tried to make something of it in her first novel, which combined a problem out of Mrs. Wharton, a setting out of Henry James, and an outsider's clumsiness with inevitable results in self-conscious stiffness and crudity of tone. Only then did she remember the advice of Miss Jewett: "The thing that teases the mind over and over for years, and at last gets itself put down on paper—whether little or great, it belongs to Literature." "Otherwise," as Miss Jewett had also said, "what might be strength in a writer is only crudeness, and what might be insight is only observation; sentiment falls to sentimentality—you can write about life, but never life itself." Miss Cather put Beacon Hill and Bohemia behind her. She returned to Nebraska, to a prairie town trying hard not to be blown away in the blast of a winter wind. She found the local habitation of her talent, and her serious career in art began.

From that point she began her journey into lost time, going back beyond Nebraska, Colorado, and Kansas to colonial New Mexico, to eighteenth-century Quebec, and finally to the pre-Civil War Virginia of her childhood, every step taking her deeper into the values and securities she set most store by. She had, to help her, her rediscovered devotion to the scenes of her early youth, the Western fields and skies she called "the grand passion of my life," her brilliant gift for rendering landscape and weather in the closest approximation to the poetic art of Turgenev and Gogol our fiction has seen, her retentive sympathy with the life of farms, small towns, prairie settlements, immigrant colonies, and Southwestern outposts and missions. In all the tales of regional America that have been produced in the past thirty years nothing has exceeded her skill in evoking the place-spirit of rural America in her finest books—"My Antonia," "A Lost Lady," "The Professor's House," and "Death Comes for the Archbishop."

The pathos of distance by which she induced her special poetry into these scenes was, of course, stimulated by her feeling that the inspiring landscape of the prairies, deserts, and mountains, no less than the gracious charms of colonial Virginia or old New York, had been obliterated by a vulgar and cheapening modernity. The garage that now stands on Charles Street in Boston on the site of the house where Mrs. James T. Fields once held court to "Learning and Talent" was symptomatic for Willa Cather of a general and humiliating degradation. So the old wagon roads of the West, "roads of Destiny" that "used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie," had been resurveyed and obliterated to make highways for tourist and motor traffic. The railways once "dreamed across the mountains" by a race of Titans, highways in the heroic conquest of the West, were streamlined for commuters between New York and Hollywood. Wooden houses and piaz-

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za'd mansions, once landmarks of pioneer fortitude and hospitality, came down and suburban Tudor or sham Château went up in their place. The frontier universities that had once fostered a scholarship of vision and historical passion yielded to academic power plants thick with politics and careerism. She despised such a world, whose literature itself she saw as mere statistics and "sensory stimuli," and apparently preferred to be despised by it.

The interesting thing about Miss Cather's career is that it started in protest against and flight from the very world she ended by idealizing and mourning. It recapitulates a characteristic American pattern of rebellion and return, censure and surrender. The prairie and small town, the Western hinterland and the neighborly community, as she presented them in her best early stories—"A Wagner Matinee," "Paul's Case," "The Sculptor's Funeral," " 'A Death in the Desert' "—were objects of a moral reproach and castigation as severe as anything she later directed against the vulgarizing influences of the modern world. She was, indeed, a pioneer in the twentieth-century "revolt from the village," and she spared no scorn in describing the provincial spirit. It had created the life of a "dunghill," of petty existences, of "little people" and a small humanity, of stingy hates and warping avarice that made generous spirits shrivel and ardent natures die. The savagery of her indictment is the strongest passion she ever summoned in any of her works. Her frontier in those days was not the West; it was the East and the world of art, with desire the goad of her heroes and heroines and the running theme of her stories, as much as it was of Dreiser's.

It was in young arists—the dreaming, headstrong, fractious, or unstable young, fated to defeat or bad ends by the materialism and ugliness of their surroundings—that she first envisaged the heroic ideal. Paul, Katharine Gaylord, Harvey Merrick, and Don Hedger are the defeated or dishonored "cases" that foreshadow the triumphant lives of Alexandra Bergson, Thea Kronborg, Antonia Shimerda, Archbishop Machebeuf, and Nancy Till, and that lend their note of frustrated desire to the middle terms of Miss Cather's argument —the inspired spirits who do not succeed but who, by some force of character or apartness of nature, lend significance to the faceless anonymity around them. These characters—the "lost lady" Marian Forrester, Myra Henshawe, Tom Outland, Professor St. Peter, even the slighter Lucy Gayheart in a later novel—are the most persuasive of Miss Cather's creations, her nearest claims to skill in a field where she was admittedly and obviously incompetent—complex and credible psychology. But somehow she could never bring her opposites into full play in a novel. They remained irreconcilably differentiated, dramatically hostile, morally and socially incapable of true complexity.

The full-bodied and heavily documented novel was never congenial to Miss Cather; she rightly understood her art to be one of elimination and selection, which eventually meant that it was an art of simplification and didactic idealization. "The Song of the Lark" and "One of Ours" drag with detail. "My Antonia" and "A Lost Lady" are her finest successes because there her selection defines, suggests, and evokes without falsely idealizing. When she seized a theme of genuine social and moral potentiality in "The Professor's House" or "My Mortal Enemy," she pared away its substance until she produced what must always be, to her admirers, disappointingly frugal and bodiless sketches of two of the most interesting subjects in the America of her time. And when she decided to model "Death Comes for the Archbishop" on the pallid two-dimensional murals of Puvis de Chavannes, she prepared the way for the disembodied idealization, making for dulness and passivity, that overtook her in "Shadows on the Rock," weakest of her books and portent of the thinness of her final volumes.

What overtook her characters and plots is the same thing that overtook her version of American life and history. She could not bring her early criticism into effective combination with her later nostalgic sentiment. She represents a case analogous to that of Van Wyck Brooks, who started by disproportionately castigating American literature and has ended in a sentimentalization

A Field Hospital

He stirs, beginning to awake.
A kind of ache
Of knowing troubles his blind warmth; he moans,
And the high hammering drone
Of the first crossing fighters shakes
His sleep to pieces, rakes
The darkness with its skidding bursts, is done.
All that he has known

Floods in upon him; but he dreads
The crooked thread
Of fire upon the darkness: "The great drake
Flutters to the icy lake—
The shotguns stammer in my head.
I lie in my own bed,"
He whispers, "dreaming"; and he thinks to wake.
The old mistake.

A cot creaks; and he hears the groan
He thinks his own—
And groans, and turns his stitched, blind, bandaged head
Up to the tent-flap, red
With dawn. A voice says, "Yes, this one";
His arm stings; then, alone,
He neither knows, remembers—but instead
Sleeps, comforted.

RANDALL JARRELL

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equally unbalanced and simple-minded. So Miss Cather, never having mastered the problem of desire in its full social and moral conditioning, passed from her tales of ambitious artists and defeated dreamers, worsted by provincial mediocrity or competitive careerism, to versions of American idealism and its defeat that never come to satisfactory grips with the conditions of society and personal morality. As her lovers, her artists, her pioneers, and her visionary Titans became disembodied of their complex humanity, so her America itself became disembodied of its principles of growth, of conflict, and of historical maturity. There obviously worked in her nature that "poetic romanticism" to which Lionel Trilling has so ably referred her case: what Parrington called "the inferiority complex of the frontier mind before the old and established," the pioneer's fear of failure but greater fear of the success which comes "when an idea becomes an actuality," the individualism to which F. J. Turner credited the pioneer's failure to "understand the richness and complexity of life as a whole." So to Miss Cather's early veneration for the distant goals and shining trophies of desire, ambition, and art, there succeeded a veneration for lost or distant sanctities which gradually spelled her diminution as a dramatic and poetic craftsman. The village, the prairie, the West, the New Mexican missions thus became in time abstractions as unworkable, in any critical or moral sense, as her simplified understanding of Mann's Joseph cycle. Art itself, in her versions of Flaubert, Gogol, Mann, or Katherine Mansfield, took on a remote ideality and aesthetic pathos that do much to explain her distaste for Dostoevski or Chekhov. And the church, to which she finally appealed as a human and historical constant, became in her unimplicated and inexperienced view of it the most abstract of all her conceptions, a cultural symbol, not a human or historical actuality, and the least real of any of the standards she invoked in her judgments and criticisms of the modern world.

She defended her art in an essay, "The Novel Démeublé," in 1922, which belongs among the theorizings by artists which constituted for Henry James an "accident" which is "happiest, I think, when it is soonest over." At best, it shows Miss Cather's temerity in venturing into "the dim wilderness of theory"; at its worst it must be taken as one of those ventures which justify themselves only because they tell what a restricted view of art some writers must impose on themselves in order to get their own kind of work done. In 1922 it had some value as a warning against the excesses of realism and cataloguing in fiction, as a preference for insight and feeling over "observation" and "description"; but when it went on to assert that Balzac's material—not merely Paris and its houses but "the game of pleasure, the game of business, the game of finance"—is "unworthy of an artist," that the banking system and Stock Exchange are scarcely "worth being written about at all," and that "the higher processes of art are all processes of simplification," it set Miss Cather down as an aesthetic fundamentalist whose achievement was bound, by the nature of her beliefs, to be sharply curtailed and truncated. She stood by the essay; she reprinted it unmodified in her later editions. And there it shows, *post facto*, how little a principle of simplification serves its believer if he is also an artist. Miss Cather was setting up a standard directly opposed to Zola's creed of naturalism—and similarly deluding and disabling in its literalness and crudity. For both sensibility and naturalism arrive at the same impasse when they deny art its right to richness of thought and complexity. What such principles limit and curtail is not merely craftsmanship; it is subject matter itself. Miss Cather saw as little as Zola did that to inhibit craftsmanship or content is to inhibit or starve the sensibility and insight themselves, and to arrive at the sterility of high-mindedness and the infirmity of an ideal. It is artists who have denied their art and their theory no possible risk, challenge, or complexity who have arrived at a longer lease on creative life; it is to James, Conrad, Yeats, Eliot, and Valéry that we turn to find, in theory no less than in practice, the right clues to endurance and authority in modern literature.

Yet it was by such means of simplification, discipline, curtailment that Miss Cather made her achievement possible and wrote the books of her best years—books which, if mostly minor, are wholly her own, and if elegiac in their version of American history, revive a past that was once, in all its innocence, a reality, and that required, in its own delusions as much as in the versions of it she created, the correction and resistance of a later realism. It was her honesty and stubborn sincerity in rendering it that made possible her real contribution to contemporary literature: she defined, like Dreiser, Scott Fitzgerald, and a few other of her contemporaries between 1910 and 1930, a sense of proportion in American experience. She knew what it meant to be raised in the hinterland of privation and harsh necessities; knew what it meant to look for escape to Chicago and the world beyond; knew how much has to be fought in one's youth and origins, what privileges of the richer world mean when they are approached from the outposts of life, what has to be broken away from and what has to be returned to for later nourishment, and how little the world appears when its romantic distances and remote promise are curtailed to the dimensions of the individual destiny. Scott Fitzgerald gave superb expression to this experience in the last eight pages of "The Great Gatsby"; Katherine Anne Porter has given another and classic version in her work; perhaps Miss Cather had something to do with preserving for such artists that proportion and perspective in American experience.

The space of seventy years is too short in human history to enable anyone to claim that he saw the world break in two during it; the measure of man's fate is not to be calculated so conveniently; to do so is to impose a personal sentiment on something too large to accept it. And it was to such sentiment, with its attendant didacticism and inflexibility, that Miss Cather finally submitted. But it is also true that she lived through a cleavage and a crisis in something more than American life; that she saw "the end of an era, the sunset of the pioneer,"; that it "was already gone, that age; nothing could ever bring it back"; and she defined the pathos, if not the challenge and moral imperative, and writer concerned in it. She did something in a time of distraction and cultural inflation to make a new art possible, as much by the end she defined for one tradition as by the personal example

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of self-correction and tenacity she set. And Miss Cather also did something the aspirant to classic quality rarely achieves: she wrote a few books—"My Antonia" and "A Lost Lady" chief among them—that are American classics and that still can tell us, in a time of sanctified journalism and demoralized sophistication, how much of a lifetime it costs to make that rare and expensive article.

Report on America

INSIDE U. S. A. By John Gunther. Harper and Brothers. $5.

FOR sheer vitality and for courage bordering on temerity John Gunther wins my profound admiration. Three years ago the explorer of the world's insides set out to do for the United States what he had done, with far less risk, for Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Disavowing the philosophical approach, he assigned himself the task of discovering "the forces that make this incomparable Golconda of a country move." He visited all forty-eight states, thirty-eight of the forty-three American cities with more than 200,000 population, and scores of smaller communities. He talked with more than 900 people—from Harry Truman to hotel bootblacks—and was shown the door only by Senator McKellar, who naturally "turned a color between a prune and a plum" when Gunther had the bad taste to mention the TVA.

Nonplussed, like thousands of others, at the flamboyant contradictions of "the greatest, craziest, most dangerous, least stable, most spectacular, least grown-up, and most powerful and magnificent nation ever known," Gunther asked everyone he met what there was about his community that distinguished it in his own mind from other communities, and, above all, who ran it. In addition he read enormously and saw everything from Chinook salmon climbing the ladders of the Bonneville Dam to Miami's rooming houses for "Gentiles Only." He took more than a million words of notes—and in the end he discovered that few generalizations were possible; that "a whole lot of phenomena run this country," which for all its reputed standardization, is staggeringly heterogeneous. And he finds this a saving grace, "because democracy, if healthy, can feed on its own defects, and take succor and sustenance from its own variety."

If the failure to synthesize, to pin down convincing over-all conclusions, appears to be a disappointing weakness of the volume, it should be noted, first, that it is an almost inevitable weakness given the design of the book, which follows a geographic pattern, progressing from state to state rather than from subject to subject; second, that Mr. Gunther proposes to write a second volume on the United States, based on Washington and national in perspective; and, third, that failure to catch the elusive quarry in this case is more than compensated for by the pleasures of the chase. In his search for the mainsprings of the U. S. A. Gunther has compiled the richest and liveliest collection of facts, impressions, observations, quotations, descriptions, statistics, portraits, and anecdotes about this country ever assembled between two covers.

The information that cascades out of this 920-page thesaurus takes a wide and colorful variety of forms, all intermingled with a journalist's scorn for sustained sobriety. There are, first, the encyclopedic little essays, like those on the raising and marketing of wheat, the structure of the Mormon church—with side excursions on the advantages and disadvantages of polygamy—the extracting of iron ore from "the biggest hole ever made by man," the "bull rings" of Iowa which furnish semen for the artificial injection of thousands of cows at $6 per cow, the life-history of the salmon, and the workings of TVA.

There are, second, the scores or more of vivid biographical sketches. In California alone Gunther pays his respects to Hiram Johnson, who once campaigned against his own shady father and whose ability was matched only by his outrageous vanity; Earl Warren; Roger Lapham; Bob Kenny ("one of the most engaging men in America"); Harry Bridges, whom he compares, oddly, to Jimmy Walker; and the fabulous immigrant banker, Giannini. Wheeler comes in for an extended, rough, but eminently fair dissection. So do Dewey ("one of the least seductive men in public life") and Bricker (a "Throttlebottom come to life"). Taft fares somewhat better and Vandenberg much better; but the real encomiums are reserved for such as LaGuardia, Philip Murray, Wayne Morse, Glen Taylor, Saltonstall ("practically the nicest person anybody ever met"), Wilson Wyatt, Harold Stassen, and Ellis Arnall.

Then there are the fascinating and little-known bits of early history of the various states, lively, illuminating, and usually introduced with good purpose. It is impossible, for example, to understand why Oregon should be traditionally Republican and conservative while its neighbor is sometimes referred to as the Soviet State of Washington, unless one knows of the staid New Englanders who settled the one and the frontier adventurers who stopped short of Alaska to settle the other. Some of the most cogent bits of analysis in the book are given to Negro-white relations, not only

The Fall of Rome

The piers are pummeled by the waves;
In a lonely field the rain
Lashes an abandoned train;
Outlaws fill the mountain caves.

Fantastic grow the evening gowns;
Agents of the Fisc pursue
Absconding tax-defaulters through
The sewers of provincial towns.

Private rites of magic send
The temple prostitutes to sleep;
All the literati keep
An imaginary friend.

Cerebrotonic Cato may
Extol the Ancient Disciplines,
But the muscle-bound Marines
Mutiny for food and pay.

Caesar's double-bed is warm
As an unimportant clerk
Writes I DO NOT LIKE MY WORK
On a pink official form.

Unendowed with wealth or pity,
Little birds with scarlet legs,
Sitting on their speckled eggs,
Eye each flu-infected city.

Altogether elsewhere, vast
Herds of reindeer move across
Miles and miles of golden moss,
Silently and very fast.

W. H. AUDEN

(Reprinted from the English monthly Horizon)

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in the "schizoid" South but in explosive Northern and Western cities like Detroit, Kansas City, and Los Angeles. In view of the striking material Gunther sets forth in this field, it is a little hard to share his characteristically buoyant conclusion that "in no other country—despite everything—have most Negroes quite so much potential opportunity as in the United States."

Strewn over every page of sober and shrewd observation are countless oddities and trivial notes that would not have occurred to a Tocqueville or a Bryce—such as the daily mileage of New York's elevators, and the fact that Charlotte, North Carolina, is statistically the murder capital of the country. In this category also are the scores of rash superlatives that sometimes give the book a superficial, even juvenile, tone that does injustice to its general quality.

The most striking revelation in Gunther's sea of information is the physical emptiness of America. I did not realize, for example, that the United States still has 455,183,251 acres of public domain, that "in the mountain states alone it owns almost one-half the total area," that some Western lands were only last year reopened to homesteading, and "almost anybody who wants to be a farmer can go out and get some." It might be a good thing to call these passages to the attention of the House Judiciary Committee, which is now considering the Stratton bill to admit to this country a wretched 100,000 displaced persons a year for four years. The same committee might also note the astonishing extent to which second-generation Americans fruitfully dominate many of the country's most vigorous and productive areas. Some of the corn counties of Nebraska, for example, are so solidly Czech that Bohemian is spoken almost as commonly as English. At the same time the state with the highest percentage (98.7) of native-born Americans with native-born parents is Arkansas, "the most untouched and unawakened of all American states"—even the South "is inclined to be ashamed of it and says that it belongs more properly to the West, which it doesn't."

What I miss most in the Gunther compilation is any proper attention to the cultural aspects of American life. Newspapers come in for a fair amount

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of consideration, though rarely as to content, but there is nothing about the impact of the movies, nothing about books or book clubs, nothing about the country's magazines, columnists, or comics, nothing about radio, and nothing about advertising—all forces that tend to bind the Boston Irish to the Volga Germans of North Dakota, the Polish Americans of Milwaukee to the Mexican Americans of California.

Much on the cultural side of American civilization may be lying dormant in Gunther's notes for "Inside U. S. A., II." Essentially this first volume is a regional guide, with the emphasis heavily political. City and state "bosses" come in for a great deal of attention, from Memphis's benevolent and surprisingly polished tyrant, Ed Crump, to Maestri of New Orleans, who, entertaining President Roosevelt at lunch, is said to have inquired, "How you like dem oysters?"

It is impossible in a review to do more than suggest the enormous energy that has gone into this book or the wealth of information that comes tumbling out. To Mr. Gunther it all adds up to the conclusions that "the long-run mood of this country is progressive," that "the era of unmitigated monopolistic control of the means of production . . . is as dead as Tutankhamen," and that while free enterprise is far from dead, "the next New Deal will make the last New Deal look mild," because with 23 per cent of the American people living outside the American system, "the free-enterprise philosophy is not working well enough." They seem like sensible conclusions, but, to Gunther's credit, the evidence for them is not stacked. One may read this same huge body of facts and come to wholly different conclusions. As Mr. Gunther says, he is not trying to be a political philosopher but a reporter. That he is—and one of the best.

ROBERT BENDINER

A Good Reminder

IN DEFENSE OF REASON. By Yvor Winters. The Swallow Press and William Morrow and Company. $4.

MR. WINTERS has here put together the three volumes in which his critical work of the last twelve or fourteen years first appeared in small editions and from small presses. To these he has added an essay on Hart Crane's "The Bridge." Together they make a unit which Mr. Winters is right in calling a Defense of Reason. That is what his work comes to; and that, therefore, is what this review chiefly intends to estimate. For surely there can be no dodging the fact that Mr. Winters's criticism is powerful, informed, consistent, and for the most part just—with only those errors caused by too great a rigidity in the structure of his intellect. Nor, as surely, can there be any doubt as to the enlightening accuracy with which he examines the technical matters, especially the metrical matters, of verse; he belongs with Bridges and Patmore; his prosody is loving and exemplary. That is, it is clear that Mr. Winters's criticism is of great use in getting at American literature both for what it says or tries to say and for how it says or fails to say it. Why is it, then, that his criticism is not in general use? What is so formidable about this body of literary thought that it is more ignored than fought, more fought than understood? Is it that we duck blows that we cannot return?

The answer lies in the habits of our age. Mr. Winters's criticism is judicial; we have a horror of judgment because we do not know what it might destroy in our potential selves. Mr. Winters's judgments are in accordance with explicit standards; we have a necessary preference, in the world we live in, for all the implicit standards we do not measure up to. Mr. Winters's standards have a tendency to be applied through law; we tend to feel that law either satisfies brute force or results from statistical averages and feel no kin whatever to the *ius gentium*: to the predictive and judicial force of our common nature. Mr. Winters believes in the supremacy of reason, under God, in human affairs; he is therefore orthodox and a monster in the wilderness; for we are not, with regard to Mr. Winters's point of view, either reasoning or reasonable men. He is as alien to us as only the thing we ignore in our hearts can be: the thing we forget we still are.

In the effort to forget a persistent thing we tend to make it something else. We try to make Mr. Winters seem what we mean by an absolutist rather than what he means by it; we make a substance out of a method, and confuse his judgments with the means—his convictions of possibility—by which he makes them. Mr. Winters is an absolutist, but only in the sense that he conceives—like the noble and necessary lies of Plato—that absolute truths must exist, which the mind may approach in apprehension and to which its judgments must attempt to conform; but he does not believe that he is in possession of the absolute, or even that he is possessed by it. He is a moralist and a rationalist; he believes in the serious value and understandableness of the major human enterprises, among which he puts the arts in first rank, and his absolute truths are the ideal forms of his allegiance. He is *therefore* against hedonism, relativism, determinism, romanticism, and that peculiarly modern theory of the division of the mind's labor on experience known as aestheticism. He will isolate nothing, except for analysis, but insists on seizing as much of the whole of experience as may be in an act of rational imagination or imaginative reason. It is not only that he by instinct repels confusion and insists on discerning order in chaos, but that he has a mastering conviction that there *is* relation and there *is* order in chaos and that these are definite and particular and are accessible by moral and rational means. It is thus that for him poetry becomes a precise instrument for the high contemplation—for the deed of high understanding—of a moral, rational, and purposeful life. I am not certain that he would accept it, but I would like to add that under his view

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poetry might be held not only to make rational statements about life and to judge it morally but also to create, or elicit, motives in life otherwise lacking or felt only as hidden promptings.

What happens when this point of view is applied to American literature? It is shown as coming everywhere short of its own intentions, as everywhere lost, or agonized, in its possibilities; short, because it could not make rational statements of what it was about; lost, because it refused the illumination and propulsive force of deliberated form. For rational statement it substituted pseudo-statement, that is, statements not correlated to the experience represented; and for deliberated form it substituted what Mr. Winters calls "the fallacy of expressive form," that is, the conception that a thing must have its own form even to that extremity where chaos is expressed by chaos. Thus the triumphs of American literature come about by tours de force, by the identification of the artist with his experience, or by accident.

Of course I exaggerate. And Mr. Winters exaggerates, but not as much as people think; he exaggerates a real thing. Surely it is enlightening to keep his point of view in mind when one thinks how much of modern American literature is either case-history or deals with the artist or outsider as the hero against the world; or again when considering the prevalence of specialized art, specialized criticism, and their consequence in the cult of initiates acting the old part of audience. Mr. Winters only exaggerates to make his point; and if we cannot accept his point as theory we cannot escape it as fact. His work is a very good reminder of the rational and formal qualities present, and highly valued, in almost every living literature except our own. Reading him, the old habits prompt and stir us.

R. P. BLACKMUR

If and When

EXPLAINING THE ATOM. By Selig Hecht. The Viking Press. $2.75.

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and that made it imperative for popularizers to rush into the field. The results were of varying quality. But with the publication of Professor Hecht's book we finally get a little masterpiece of popularization.

I have always felt that a successful application of the art of simplifying science for the layman requires not only that the writer be a good writer but that he be a good scientist. Usually we get either one or the other—and sometimes neither. But Hecht belongs to the Huxleyan variety: he is both a first-class scientist and a writer who expresses himself with ease and polish. The result is a book which I would like to recommend strongly to all intelligent citizens. True enough, the lay reader with no elementary equipment of physics and chemistry will hardly take in the contents as rapidly as he would a newspaper column; however, with a little effort, he should be able to digest most of the ideas presented.

Professor Hecht, who by the way is a distinguished biophysicist, uses the historical method in developing his topic. Step by step the drama unfolds, beginning in Act I with the atom of the Greeks and ending in Act II with the peculiar "splitting" of uranium (1939). From then on, "neutrons," "fission," "chain reactions" were used and applied more and more—until the mighty atomic bomb swallowed a section of the earth's crust and shattered the few atoms of complacency still imbedded in us (finale of Act III).

Toward the end of his book Dr. Hecht writes: "If man can put into the practice of world relations the same honesty, the same courage, the same intellect, and the same drive that have gone into science and the accumulation of knowledge, then the future will be a happy one." This brings us to the big "if" and to the inevitable "how." For consider that man: what an incongruous mixture of glory and folly is this fellow; how utterly incomprehensible, for example, that this creature of nature who dives into the atom and brings to the surface divine specks of beauty and truth should be the same creature who dives into hell and brings about world wars. Ye men of wisdom, what is the answer?

BENJAMIN HARROW

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Science as Myth

TRACKS IN THE SNOW: Studies in English Science and Art. By Ruthven Todd. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.75.

WE HAVE long thought T. S. Eliot correct in saying that after the seventeenth century came a fissure between feeling and the scientific intellect, a dissociation of sensibility. These four essays raise, by implication, a certain doubt of Eliot's opinion, for they suggest that between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries painters and writers like Blake, Fuseli, and John Martin appropriated the "experimental and judicious knowledge" of science and heightened it to vision.

The fifty-six illustrations themselves are lavishly demonstrative. Mr. Todd, keeping the easy, competent tone of the British amateur, fittingly chooses his title from the elegant Edward Gibbon, whose taste for the sciences, he believed, enabled the anatomist and chemist to track him "in their own snow."

Eighteenth-century science was, of course, imperfectly experimental and often injudicious in its curiosity about "phlogiston," its evidence on the Druids and the Flood, and its harebrained regard of orangutans, wild girls, and all those outlandish creatures the Scottish Lord Monboddo pursued for a lifetime —Dr. Johnson: "I am *afraid* (chuckling and laughing) Monboddo does not know he is talking nonsense." This uncertain, occultist science, in the "rational" eighteenth century, inspired in the arts visions we can only call nocturnal. Maybe Mr. Todd's largest service is forcing us again to recognize what we have too often forgotten—the nocturnal, Gothic eighteenth century rediscovered by the surrealists.

The five illustrations of "scientific" museum exhibits are, for example, really nocturnal, surreal: the skeleton within a dense and hideously trimmed forest of severed arteries, fiddling upon a necrotic femur or offering us mayflies and coils of viscera. Here the vision is as double as Tchelitchew's; the pleasures are as ghastly as Dali's. Studies of fowl and embryos, with other anatomical nudities, by George Stubbs are surrealist animations as well as documents of science.

Blake, intending to free Albion from the science of Bacon and Newton, proclaimed that imagination is divinity in every man. Mr. Todd, in reply, asks whether Blake's ability to see the world in a grain of sand was possible only after microscopic investigations by Leeuwenhoek; his Albion symbolism itself was adopted from Druidical "archaeologists" who reconstructed the Serpent Temple at Avebury; his myth transfigured the speculative myth of the Deluge.

More obsessive are the symbols of Fuseli, that entomologist and nightmare visionary who seemed to Benjamin Robert Haydon simply "a little white-headed, lion-faced man in an old flannel dressing-gown tied round his waist with a piece of rope and upon his head the bottom of Mrs. Fuseli's work basket." Mr. Todd mentions the relation between this contriver of "neatly coiffured obscenities" and the pre-Raphaelites. He might have insisted harder upon his relation with that other arranger of cruel, impassive masks—Aubrey Beardsley, as lapidary as Fuseli but more ceremonial and decorative.

The inventor-painter John Martin hardly belongs in the earlier strange world of Fuseli and Blake. The fissure is deep between Martin's ingenious plans for elastic iron ships and his titantic Biblical spectacles like "Belshazzar's Feast." His visions monstrously enlarge space; he once explained, "I mean that tower to be seven miles high." The tiny studies by Blake, however, prove that mere enlargement of space is not psychological landscape, and Martin's care to be "astronomically correct" indicates that he cannot master the fantastic perspective, the evocative distortion, of the nocturnal eighteenth century. His adaptations from science are literal. He is no *voyant*, but only an illustrator. For him madness is a refuge; in Fuseli and Blake what looks like madness is often an appropriation of science as myth, a special unification of sensibility.

WYLIE SYPHER

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Books in Brief

STALIN MUST HAVE PEACE. By Edgar Snow. Random House. $2.50.

I AM quite ready to believe Edgar Snow when he tells us that Stalin must have peace: so must we all if civilization is to survive. The question is whether the Soviet government is following policies likely to secure peace or, like our own, blundering along the road to war. On this point I find Snow less convincing. However, I welcome his book—an expansion of his *Saturday Evening Post* articles—as a worth-while attempt to explain to the American public the rationale of Soviet actions which appear quite unreasonable to us, and as a useful reminder that we frequently heave stones at the Kremlin from a morally exposed glass house. Snow and the *Saturday Evening Post* are to be congratulated on this series. I can only hope that sometime we shall be able to applaud Snow, and, say, *Pravda,* on a companion series explaining America to the Russians. That would be a sign that peace was not only necessary but possible.

INCOME: AN INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMICS. By A. C. Pigou. The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

SEEKING to broaden the outlook of his students, the professor of engineering at Cambridge University asked the doyen of British economists to give them a short course of lectures. This little book, which discusses the forces affecting both the production and distribution of income, is the end-result. Written with rare lucidity and enlivened by a dry wit, it admirably achieves its author's aim of providing "an outline sketch of an important part of economics that shall be intelligible and, if possible, interesting to non-economists."

KEITH HUTCHISON

BERLIN UNDERGROUND, 1938-1945. By Ruth Andreas-Friedrich. Henry Holt and Company. $3.

THIS BOOK supplements in an interesting way A. W. Dulles's report on "Germany Underground" reviewed in *The Nation* of May 17. While Mr. Dulles told the story of fateful conspiracies which might have changed the course of history, Miss Andreas-Friedrich, in a diary covering the period from the days of Munich to Berlin's occupation by Russian soldiers, describes the deeds, efforts, and feelings of Germans who played no important part in politics but were merely decent people trying to remain decent during the Nazi years.

Miss Andreas-Friedrich is resentful because the little things that Germans like herself and her friends were able to do in the fight against Hitlerism were hardly ever appreciated outside of Germany. As a matter of fact, those little things brought many thousands of Germans into concentration camps or to the gallows. The author and her friends, through the years of Hitler rule, helped the persecuted, hid and fed Jews, while they hoped and waited for the day when the Third Reich would be destroyed by one of the two forces powerful enough for this work—the German army or the Allied armies. With the true conspirators the author had only casual con-

The History of Japan

By KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE

This brief but comprehensive history of Japan covers the subject from mythological beginnings to the present American occupation. "For those who want to learn as much about Japan's past as can be learned from one volume, in order to understand her present and make a sensible guess as to her possible future, this is the book," says *The Christian Century.*

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nections. She gives, however, an impressive description of their trials and execution, which in itself makes "Berlin Underground" worth reading.

JOSEPH BORNSTEIN

Fiction in Review

VLADIMIR NABOKOV'S new novel, "Bend Sinister" (Holt, $2.75), is about a professor of philosophy in an unnamed country who is destroyed by the tyrannical government that has come to power. By my count the book has four successful moments. Three are moments of amusement.

On page 50 Professor Krug, pressed by his university colleagues to present a petition to the Dictator, with whom he had had a boyhood acquaintance, explains why the attempt would be ill-advised. When Krug and the Toad (the name by which the tyrant is privately called) were at school together, Krug had sat on the Toad's face —and not merely once or twice but regularly, as a habit. " 'I sat upon his face,' said Krug stolidly, 'every blessed day for about five school years—which makes, I suppose, about a thousand sittings.' "

On page 124 two organ-grinders arrive simultaneously in a backyard. The pair of musicians look very uncomfortable. Krug, watching them from a window, comments, " 'It is a very singular picture. An organ grinder is the very emblem of oneness. But here we have an absurd duality.' "

On page 142 Krug, on his way to an interview with the Toad, passes through a room equipped with a large radio-like machine attended by three doctors and two members of the secret police, from which there comes a steady beat like an African drum. It turns out that the machine amplifies the Dictator's heartbeats so that the strains on his health can be constantly controlled.

There is also in Mr. Nabokov's novel an instance of effective literary imagination. At the start of the story Krug's wife has died, leaving him with a small son to care for. There is a scarcity of servants, and Krug is forced to hire a very young girl as nursemaid for the boy. This teen-aged domestic, at first only slatternly and incompetent, develops into a horror of lewdness, and Mr. Nabokov very tellingly suggests the root-connection between the nursemaid's degeneracy and the social-political degradation that surrounds her.

Such few moments of wit or enlightment in a book of 242 pages would not ordinarily be worth this isolation and extended report. The reason I note them here is to indicate how little relief from tedium I was able to find in a novel whose way was prepared by the acclaim which its predecessor, Mr. Nabokov's "The Real Life of Sebastien Knight," received in certain critical quarters and which is itself presented by its publishers as an item of great literary prestige.

I suppose it is Mr. Nabokov's elaborate prose method that persuades his publishers that "Bend Sinister" is so distinguished a work of fiction; and I daresay there will be a considerable public to agree with them. This will be the public that has become so tired of the arid prose and method of contemporary naturalism that it welcomes any change as a change for the better. But in point of fact, what looks like a highly charged sensibility in Mr. Nabokov's style is really only fanciness, forced imagery, and deafness to the music of the English language, just as what looks like an innovation in method is already its own kind of sterile convention.

Here is a sample, a single sentence, of Mr. Nabokov's prose; the scene is on a staircase where Krug has to pass a young couple just come from a fancy-dress party, the boy dressed as a football player, the girl dressed as Carmen:

> They separated and he caught a glimpse of her pale, dark-eyed, not very pretty face with its glistening lips as she slipped under his door-holding arm and after one backward glance from the first landing ran upstairs trailing her wrap with all its constellations—Cepheus and Cassiopeia in their eternal bliss, and the dazzling tear of Capella, and Polaris the snowflake on the grizzly fur of the Cub, and the swooning galaxies —those mirrors of infinite space *qui m'effrayent, Blaise,* as they did you, and where Olga is not, but where mythology stretches strong circus nets, lest thought, in its ill-fitting tights, should break its old neck instead of rebouncing with a hep and a hop—hopping down again into this urine-soaked dust to take that short run with the half pirouette in the middle and display the extreme simplicity of heaven in the acrobat's amphiphorical gesture, the candidly open hands that start a brief shower of applause while he walks backwards and then, reverting to virile manners, catches the little blue handkerchief, which his muscular flying mate, after her own exertions, takes from her heaving hot bosom—heaving more than her smile suggests—and tosses to him, so that he may wipe the palms of his aching weakening hands.

Surely writing like this is elaborate chicanery. It is not daring; it is merely wilful. It is not original; it is anarchic in an established pattern. It bears the same relation to the prose of the contemporary masters of innovation as the prose of, say, "Gentleman's Agreement" bears to nineteenth-century prose.

On the other hand, to dismiss it simply as bad taste is to pass over a possible larger significance. Mr. Nabokov's novel is written in a claustrophobic style in which the reader's mind is allowed to do no work of its own, in which we are led by meaningless associations into blind alleys and trapped in boredom. But after all, Mr. Nabokov's story of the dehumanization of man under tyranny is a claustrophobic story. Whether or not it was the author's intention to model his prose system on the social system he is attacking, this is exactly what he has accomplished. If, then, Mr. Nabokov's book is praised as a new kind of literary strength asserting itself against the weakness of the old naturalism, must we not be reminded of the way in which a people who have lost faith in liberal democracy welcome tyranny because it initially presents itself to them as a new organizing strength?

The point is obviously not to be pressed too far, and of course I am not suggesting that Mr. Nabokov is a literary precursor of dictatorship. But I do suggest that the passivity of mind and spirit demanded by "Bend Sinister" is not as far removed as may appear from the passivity of mind and spirit demanded by dictatorial governments, and that when we submit ourselves to it we are perhaps betraying a disenchantment with more than old literary methods.

DIANA TRILLING

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Films

JAMES AGEE

"Monsieur Verdoux"—II

CHAPLIN'S performance as Verdoux is the best piece of playing I have ever seen: here, I cannot even specify the dozen or so close-ups each so great and so finely related and timed that withdrawn and linked in series they are like the notes of a slow, magnificent, and terrifying song, which the rest of the film serves as an accompaniment. I could write many pages, too, about the richness and quality of the film as a work of art, in fact, of genius; and as many more trying, hopelessly, to determine how Chaplin's intellect, instinct, intuition, creative intelligence, and pure experience as a master artist and as a showman, serve and at times disserve one another: for intellectually and in every other kind of self-exhaustion this seems incomparably his most ambitious film. And since the film is provocative of so much that cannot be examined as fun, I wish I might also use the many thousands of words I would require to do it adequate honor, purely as fun. And all the more because I love and revere the film as deeply as any I have seen, and believe that it is high among the great works of this century, I wish I might discuss at proper length its weaknesses as a work of art and of moral understanding. I have reluctantly chosen, instead, to suggest a single aspect of its meaning, which seems to me particularly important. And this itself, I fear, I may have reduced beyond usefulness.

Chaplin's theme, the greatest and the most appropriate to its time that he has yet undertaken, is the bare problem of surviving at all in such a world as this. With his usual infallibility of instinct he has set his story in Europe; Europeans are aware of survival as a problem, as we are not. As rightly, he has set aside the tramp, whose charming lessons in survival are too wishful for his purposes, for his first image of the Responsible Man, and of modern civilization. (For Verdoux embodies much of the best that can be said of modern civilization, whether democratic-capitalist, fascist, or communist: whatever he may lack in the way of conscience, he does have brains; and whatever crimes he commits, they are committed, or so he believes, out of compassionate love and in uncompromising discharge of responsibility.) The tramp is the free soul intact in its gallantry, innocence, eagerness for love, ridiculousness, and sorrow; we recognize in him much that is dear to us in ourselves. Verdoux is so much nearer and darker that we can hardly bear to recognize ourselves in him. He is the committed, dedicated soul, and this soul is not intact: we watch its death agonies. And this tragic process is only the more dreadful because it is depicted not gravely but briskly, with a cold savage gaiety; the self-destroying soul is rarely aware of its own predicament.

The problem of survival: the Responsible Man. Chaplin develops his terrible theme chiefly as a metaphor for business. But the film is also powerful as a metaphor for war: the Verdoux home as an embattled nation, the wife and child as the home front, Verdoux as expeditionary force, hero in the holiest of causes, and war criminal. But it is even more remarkable and fascinating as a study of the relationship between ends and means, a metaphor for the modern personality—that is, a typical "responsible" personality reacting to contemporary pressures according to the logic of contemporary ethics.

In the terms of this metaphor the basic cast is small. Verdoux, his wife, and their son are differing aspects of a single personality. Verdoux is the master, the intelligence and the deep unconscious; he has estranged his soul and his future. He has made the assumption that most people make, today—one of the chief assumptions on which modern civilization rests. That is, that in order to preserve intact in such a world as this those aspects of the personality which are best and dearest to one, it is necessary to exercise all that is worst in one; and that it is impossible to do this effectively if one communicates honestly with one's best. Accordingly the personality which, until the world struck that living down, lived in poverty and docility, but happily, is broken and segregated.

The wife and child are shut away in a home which is at once a shrine and a jail; and there, immobilized, and cut off from the truth, they virtually cease to exist as living objects of love; they become an ever more rigid dream. For when the worst and the best in the personality are thus segregated, and the worst is thus utilized in the nominal service of the best, it is inevitably the good, which is exploited; the evil, which thinks of itself as faithful slave, is treacherous master; and evil, being active and knowledgeable, grows; and good, rendered motionless and denied knowledge, withers. Like most men obsessed with the world's ruthlessness, Verdoux carries his veneration of innocence to the extreme; he is determined that it shall never be touched, shall never change (the song of how many million homesick soldiers: "We want to

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find everything at home just as we left it"). But change is inevitable, and uncontrollable. Ruthlessness and the murderous adoration of static innocence enlarge each other; and the ruthless man becomes the more ruthless because he has broken all communication with innocence. And innocence itself is altered. At the moment Verdoux tells his wife that they own their home at last, she dares to remember sadly that they were happier when they were poor. Her face shows the terrible drugged passiveness of the oversustained, the still more terrible intuitive guilt that comes of all that is uneasily apprehended, untold, and unasked. Small wonder that she has become a cripple; the wonder is that she continues to breathe. Passiveness was forced on her, truth was destroyed, love was undermined, her own love became pity, as surely as her husband's, and in pity and in fear she failed to question what was being done. As is so often true, it was not she who wanted to be so well provided for; that was her husband's desire, the one desire he might hope to satisfy; so she let him satisfy it.

As for Verdoux, he is irreparably committed. All the heart he has left prevents his confessing to his wife, and prevents his changing trades. He could only have chosen his course through defect of love—vengefulness and self-pity masked as pity, pity masked as love; the love-destroying, monstrous arrogance it requires to make the innocent answerable for your guilt—and the constant necessity of deceiving love has damaged love still more profoundly. Like many business men who feel unloved, or incapable of full enough love, he can only propitiate, and express, his love by providing for his family as handsomely as possible. (He can desire this of course, rather than the bare subsistence his wife prefers, only because he respects the standards of the world he thinks he despises. During his docile years, remember, he served at the high altar of modern civilization, breathing year in and year out The Bank's soul-dissolving odor of sanctity, all day, every day, touching the sacred wealth he must never dare touch with his conscious desire. When he was thrown out of his job, this ruthlessness released the tremendously impounded ruthlessness in him.) But that is never well enough to satisfy him—and only *his* satisfaction really counts, in this household—for his wife and child scarcely exist for him except as a self-vindicating dream,

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which he must ceaselessly labor to sustain, improve, perfect, be worthy of. A vicious cycle is established. Only through the best good-providing possible can Verdoux at once express his love, quiet his dying intuition that his love is defective and that he is wrong even in the little that he believes to be right, sustain the dream that is all that remains of love, require of himself ever more obsessive industriousness in crime, and silence his wife.

As good, by his will, is ever more stonily immobilized, evil becomes ever more protean in disguise and self-disguise, ever more mercurial in its journeyings. (The personality is also a constant metaphor for modern civilization —in which, for one instance, creative power is paralyzed except in the interests of gain and destruction; in those interests it is vigorous as never before.) Verdoux cannot bear to sit still, to stop work, long enough to realize his predicament. He cannot feel "at home," at home. He has to act his roles as perfect husband and father, dearly as he wants merely to *be* both, just as he acts all his other roles. All that he loves is saturated in deceit; and he in self-deceit as well. He gets home seldom, apparently never longer than overnight; the divided spirit can only assert its unity, even its illusion of unity or its desire, in twilight contemplation or in dreams; and the pressure of business is always on him. The pressure of business indeed! Verdoux's family is almost lifeless; such piteously cherished life as it retains, he is hopelessly estranged from. All that requires his intelligence, skill, and vitality, all that gives him life, is in his business. He is the loneliest character I know of: he can never be so desperately lonely as during these hours among those dearest to him, when he must deceive not mere victims, or the world at large, but those he loves. The only moments during which this appalling loneliness is broken, during which he ever honestly commmunicates, however briefly, with other human beings, are those few moments during which he can know that his victims realize they are being murdered. No doubt he loves his wife and child—there are two of the most heart-stopping, beautiful close-ups ever made, to prove that—but in the fearful depths into which he cannot risk a glance he loves only their helplessness; and deeper, only the idea of love; and that only because it consecrates his true marriage, which is to murder.

(*To be continued*)

Records

B. H. HAGGIN

VICTOR has issued Bartok's Violin Concerto (Set 1120); $5.85); Columbia his Piano Concerto No. 3 (Set 674; $4). The violin concerto is an expansive piece of writing with all the outward appearances of connected musical discourse—but in an idiom that makes no sense to me. It seems well performed by Menuhin with the Dallas Symphony under Dorati, and is well recorded. The piano concerto, on the other hand, is a work whose musical thought I can understand; and the first movement, with its arresting opening proclamation by the piano, its fierce, harsh concentration throughout, is the only music of Bartok I have been interested and impressed by; but the rest of what I understand—like the sour chorale and the bird-twitterings in the second movement, the sour fugue in the finale—I find uninteresting. The performance by Gyorgy Sandor and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy seems good; and it is recorded with clarity and good balance of piano and orchestra; but the sound of the piano is cold and that of the high violins in loud passages stridently sharp.

As for other Columbia releases, they include a new recording of Schubert's great Symphony No. 9 made by Bruno Walter with the New York Philharmonic (Set 679; $7). The first movement, as Walter conducts it, is spacious and grand; the second is poignant and lovely, its dramatic climax effectively achieved; but the remaining two come out less well. The continuity in pace of Toscanini's performances is a manifestation of their unfailing continuity of impetus, which one would feel even if he played the scherzo movement of Schubert's symphony in the same relaxed manner as Walter, and with the same occasional slowing down of pace. But in Walter's relaxations of style and tempo one feels the slackness that is his chief weakness as a musician. The performance is recorded with insufficient bass; and its sound is dry and drab, with the violins lusterless and sharp.

Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 2, not a work of much consequence, is well-peformed by Mitropoulos with the Minneapolis Symphony (Set 673; $6); and the performance is reproduced with great distinctness, but again with dryness and lack of luster in the violins (there is also some wavering pitch in my copy). Tchaikovsky's Serenade Opus 48 for string orchestra, a moderately engaging minor work, gets a burly performance by Ormandy with the Philadelphia Orchestra, which is reproduced by a wide-range machine with coarseness that disappears on one of limited range (Set 677; $4).

Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 3 is the best of the group in substance and structure, but even so it is something to hear only when it is played as he played it—which I haven't yet heard anyone do, and which Cyril Smith doesn't do in his performance with the City of Birmingham (England) Orchestra under George Weldon (Set 671; $6). The performance is reproduced with richness of sonority, but with insufficient clarity of detail and poor balance of piano and orchestra.

E. M. Forster's address at the recent Harvard Symposium of Music Criticism —of which I have seen the text—was full of sharp insights, formulated with subtlety and wit, which seem to have been as completely out of the aesthetic and intellectual worlds of some of the other participants as one might have expected them to be. I judge from what I was told of the reactions ("They were annoyed because they thought his arguments were wrong but he wowed the audience with an English charm act") and what I read in a Sunday article of Mr. Downes. Considering what the Downeses and Langs at the symposium are usually concerned with in their discussion of a work of art, I can't imagine them even knowing what Forster was talking about—to say nothing of appreciating its deadly force—when, describing the two aims of criticism, he said: "The first and the more important is aesthetic. It considers the object in itself, as an entity, and tells us what it can about its life. The second aim is subsidiary; the relation of the object to the rest of the world." This means consideration of "the conditions under which the work of art was composed,

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the influences which formed it (criticism adores influences), the influence it has exercised on subsequent works, prenatal possibilities"—much of which he conceded to be valuable, "but what meanwhile has become of Monteverdi's Vespers, or the Great Mosque at Delhi, or 'The Frogs' of Aristophanes, or any other work which you happen to have in mind?" If we wheel up to the work of art even the best aesthetic theory "and apply it with its measuring rods and pliers and forceps . . . it doesn't work, the two universes have not even collided"; on the other hand, "if criticism strays from her central aesthetic quest to influences and psychological and historical considerations . . . contact is established. But no longer with a work of art."

Again, those who believe it the critic's function to nurture and guide the artist can hardly have been receptive to Forster's view that criticism was irrelevant to the creative process. It could point out to Forster the large number of sudden deaths in one of his novels, and get him, the next time, to space them out and provide plausible causes, but could not inspire him with anything vital to put in their place. "A piece of contemporary music, to my ear, has a good many sudden deaths in it; the phrases expire as rapidly as the characters in my novel, the chords cut each others' throats"; but these defects "are doubtless vital to the general conception" and "are not to be remedied by substituting sweetness." Criticism could make Forster aware of his immoderate use of the word "but" (the result of a university education); it could caution a legally-minded writer on his "ifs." This was "the sort of trifling help which criticism can give the artist. She cannot help him in great matters."

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